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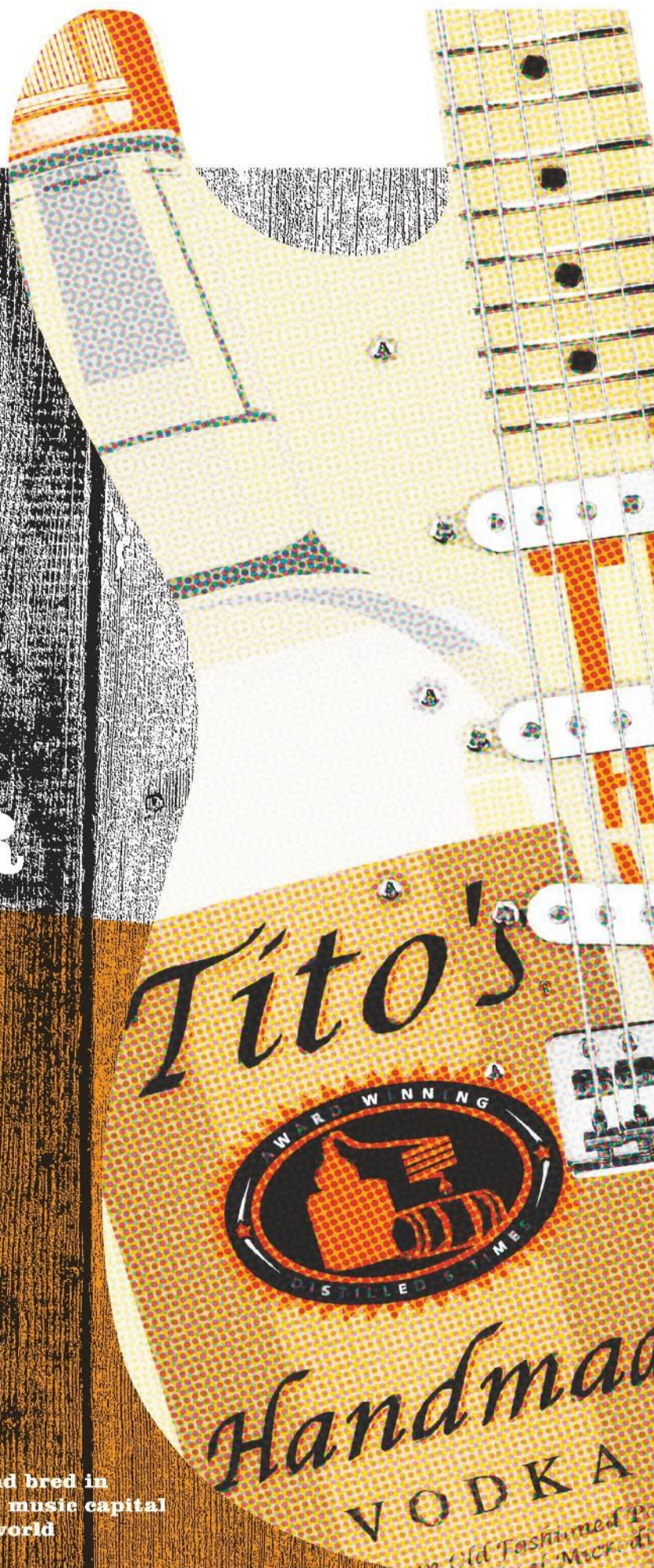
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*****SHAMELESS PLUG!!!***** *****SHAMELESS**

LETTER OF THE WEEK

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POETIC JUSTICE

I'm so excited Suede received the Godlike Genius Award at this year's NME Awards. Their contribution to music – not to mention my life – is finally being acknowledged. To mark the occasion, I have composed a poem using Suede song titles. It's my way of saying thanks for a body of great work and many happy memories.

*When the rain falls quiet loud
A new generation feel electricity
Modern boys and graffiti women picnic by
the motorway
And head music colours the asphalt world.
They're so young
These lazy painted people
That the big time is only one hit to the body away.
But black or blue
Trash or cheap
Every Monday morning comes
And the sounds of the street
Break down the wild ones
And remind them that Saturday night may be the perfect day
But this Hollywood life makes beautiful ones
pantomime horses.*



*But it's still life for the heroin heroine
The bony, bored Bentswood boys
For diesel drowners digging a hole
The can't-get-enough crackheads
Who feel wonderful sometimes
Yet feel the weight of the world
Always [...cut!]*

Stanley Notte, via email

Ben Homewood: A touching – if slightly unhinged – tribute, Stanley. Your lyrical worshipping just goes to show that Suede are truly godlike. What a band. What a career. What a frontman!

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mouse. But you're right – he always put the tunes first. Annie Mac has a great record of doing exactly the same, so I can't see any reason the *Evening Show* won't become even more important. As for Zane, can you really imagine his enthusiasm for new music drying up? If he has half the impact he had at Radio 1 in his new job, then Apple won't know what's hit it...

...HIYA, ANNIE

As a 16-year-old female radio presenter, I find it inspiring that Annie Mac is replacing Zane Lowe. After 12 years it's fair to pass the baton to a woman with new ideas of how a primetime show can deliver the best fresh sounds. Annie has always rocked – bring on the Big Mac inspiration! Stella Cooper, via email

BH: I totally agree. With over a decade in the game, a passion for music every bit as massive as her predecessor and a huge knowledge of electronic music, Annie Mac will be awesome. Exciting times ahead for Radio 1.

TIME FOR A NEW HERO?

After Noel Gallagher turned down production duties for their new album, The Libertines need someone who will serve their sound. The Libertines sounded their best on tracks like 'What A Waster' and 'Don't Look Back Into The Sun', both with Bernard Butler at the helm. He had a knack for controlling the mayhem and finding moments of clarity among the carnage. So why not bring back the man who can deliver the best possible version of The Libertines, as their legacy deserves?

David Meadows, via email

While a new Libertines album definitely does excite me, there's always the worry that it'll be a middle-of-the-road comeback (Pixies, I'm looking at you). To avoid that, and for the Libs to make an energetic punk record, the best producer would be Steve Albini. But

then again, getting Mick Jones back would do no harm. You've just gotta hope they write the songs to make their third album one that is a worthy comeback. Calum Cashin, via email

BH: Calum and David – it is exciting to think of what the Libs might cook up were they reunited with Bernard Butler or Mick Jones, but I'd rather see someone new. Just imagine the racket Albini would force out of them. Allow me to be fanciful and take this opportunity to suggest Kanye. Bring on 'My Beautiful Dark Wasted Ancestry'.



SEEYA, ZANE...

Zane Lowe leaving Radio 1 is a big loss. In recent years the station has struggled to be consistent in support of emerging guitar or alternative bands, yet Lowe could always be relied on to champion those he felt deserved the attention. One thing Radio 1 has suffered from is employing people, like Chris Moyles, who believed they were more important than the music

they occasionally played. Lowe was able to command respect by understanding it was the tunes that most people listened for. I've got nothing against Annie Mac; I just can't help feeling that alternative music has lost a passionate supporter. Neil Renton, via email

BH: You must be kidding about Zane's personality; he makes Chris Moyles look like an agoraphobic field

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NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Blur
Go Out

For a band like Blur, so dedicated to constant evolution, a no-warning comeback takes some delicate navigation as they dip their toes back in the water. Luckily the brilliant 'Go Out' mashes up the scratchy rock insouciance of 1997's 'Blur' with touches of electronic modernism à la '13' and a lolloping pop chorus straight out of their Britpop peak. The boys are back in town; rejoice.

Mark Beaumont, writer

2. Questlove/Black Thought/
Charli XCX
Groove Is In The Heart

Deee-Lite's 1990 hit 'Groove Is In The Heart' was one of the greatest singles of that decade. Now the fizzy, fuzzy, pop-funk hit has been recreated by members of The Roots and pop's face of the moment Charli XCX. It's for a TV advert but it's worth a listen: the groove is looser than the original, Black Thought's interjections ("Astronomical!") are amusing and it hints at a possible new direction for Charli after 'Sucker's' tude-pop.

Dan Stubbs, News Editor

3. Sufjan Stevens
No Shade In The Shadow
Of The Cross

After the frenzied cosmic panic of 2010's 'The Age Of Adz', a quiet breath. 'No Shade...' is the first single from the Detroit musician's seventh studio album, 'Carrie & Lowell', in which he confronts his grief following the death of his estranged mother. "Fuck me, I'm falling apart", he sings in a horrified whisper, over gently finger-picked acoustic guitar that belies the song's only measure of composure.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

4. Modest Mouse
The Ground Walks,
With Time In A Box

It's eight years since Modest Mouse's last album, 'We Were Dead Before The Ship Even Sank'. Their sixth – 'Strangers To Ourselves' – turns up next month and the latest aperitif might be the best so far. 'The Ground Walks, With Time In A Box' is as sprawling as its title, with Isaac Brock yelp-rapping wonky screeds to an ever-shifting breakneck funk, a different thrilling riff every 30 seconds.

Matthew Horton, writer

5. Wolf Alice
Giant Peach

Wolf Alice's debut is still untitled and isn't out until June, but 'Giant Peach' is a freakishly exciting first taster. Played as 'The Jam' at live shows last year, it's now a souped-up ode to the grime, grit and beauty of London. "What the hell keeps me here in this dark old town that I've adored", murmurs Ellie Rowsell before screaming, "My dark and pretty town!" as guitars zoom. Absolutely next level.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

6. East India Youth
Turn Away

The latest single from William Doyle's second album as East India Youth starts off sounding like a helicopter landing. Synths chop like rotors, before it gets all emotional. "Turn away, I never should be seen to be falling from grace", Doyle sings over swollen electronics. In the second half he concocts exhilarating motorik rhythms; such versatility makes 'Culture Of Volume' a tantalising prospect.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

7. Action Bronson
Terry

Venables, Gilliam, Pratchett: there are a lot of great Terrys. Action Bronson isn't rapping about them on this cut from his upcoming 'Mr Wonderful' album, though; he's on about getting dumped for doing too many drugs. Still, he remains upbeat ("Imma strike it rich any day now") and shares his daily routine ("Smoke good, fuck, eat, drink, drive nice car, wear all green mink"). Affable, unstoppable; maybe he's likening himself to Terry Wogan?

David Renshaw, Acting Deputy News Editor

8. Angel Haze
Gxmes

A bitter disdain fuels 'Gxmes', the second single from the New York-based rapper's upcoming EP, 'In The Winter Of Wet Years'. "You've been creepin' on the low/Baby I know", she sings over Texan producer Troy Noka's moody, Nintendo trap beats. 'Gxmes' arrives in the wake of her split from long-time partner Ireland Baldwin but it's a diatribe rather than sappy lament. "Best in the game/The best put me in Guinness", she spits.

Charlotte Richardson Andrews, writer

9. Pussy Riot
I Can't Breathe (feat. Richard Hell)

Subversive Russian collective Pussy Riot's first English song sounds like a dystopian nightmare. It chronicles one, too: sung by Sasha Klokova of Siberian punks Jack Wood, it immortalises police brutality victim Eric Garner, an African-American man who died in New York. Musically it's chilling, but when (white) punk Richard Hell performs Garner's last words, there are no black artists on the track and the video features Pussy Riot members Masha and Nadya getting buried alive, it feels like a misfire.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

10. Earl Sweatshirt
Quest/Power

Following last month's collaboration with pro skateboarder Nakel Smith, 'Silencedarapgame', Odd Future affiliate Earl Sweatshirt has uploaded 'Quest/Power' to his Soundcloud under the same #hiking hashtag. This Budgie and Samiyam-produced track comprises warped samples and Sweatshirt's quotable raps: "Don't get close to me, my heart is cold like the fucking carrots in a grocery story".

Nadia Khomami, Acting News Reporter

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

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11. Chance The Rapper & The Social Experiment Lady Friend

'Lady Friend' sees Chance The Rapper plugging into sweet, sultry soul with a typically quirky lyrical bent. "I'm a cuddle, not a dildo", he whispers over delicate piano, saxophone so laid-back it's practically horizontal and backing vocals nabbed straight from Stevie Wonder's 1980s filing cabinet. "You're just... gorgeous", he continues, setting himself up as the most charming rapper of 2015.

Leonie Cooper, writer

12. Big Sean One Man Can Change The World

Big Sean's grandma grew up in segregated Virginia and was one of the first black female captains in US army history at WW1. This soulful piano tribute leads the Detroit MC into introspection of his own: "Standing next to Jim Carrey, we trading stories and laughs/You not the only one I know got rich wearin' masks", he raps, between choruses by John Legend and Kanye West. Huge.

Al Horner, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

13. Together Pangea I Looked In Too

"I guess you really don't care/I guess you really don't mind", drawls William Keegan at some uninterested girlfriend on this first new tune from LA garage-rock trio Together Pangea since last year's debut album 'Badillac'. They sound just as nonchalant themselves – this typically ramshackle flurry of fuzzed-up buzzsaw guitars and cheery vocals is a sign that their next album should be just as fun and frenzied as the last.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

14. Jacco Gardner Find Yourself

"Let me take you/To a summer scene", sings Jacco Gardner on this first single from new album 'Hypnophobic'. So away we go. 'Find Yourself' journeys to a land far from Gardner's native Netherlands. Guitars wind like Tame Impala at half speed and whimsical, stoned-sounding vocals ("Open up your doors but only do it right") create a lazy, blissful atmosphere that's hard to tear yourself away from.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

15. White Shadows Give Up Give Out Give In

Originally an acoustic B-side to The Vines' 2006 single 'Don't Listen To The Radio', 'Give Up Give Out Give In' is given a more euphoric makeover by Craig Nicholls' new side project, White Shadows. Along with Nicholls, Empire Of The Sun's Nick Littlemore and his younger brother Sam twist the song into a gorgeous, blissed-out dance tune that will convince you summer's already here. In February, that's quite a feat.

Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor



16. Torres Sprinter

An electronic storm rages at the start of the title track on Torres' second album, but Mackenzie Scott's pounding guitar maintains a steady defiance that carries through into her lyrics: confronted with a pastor who "went down for pornography", she runs boldly on. "I was a sprinter then", she sings in her harrowing cry. A worthy peer to Sharon Van Etten.

Laura Snapes, Features Editor

17. Jon Hopkins I Remember

You'll have to listen closely to Jon Hopkins' cover of Yeasayer's 2010 track 'I Remember' to hear the original. Hopkins has stripped it of shimmering stereo synths, epic drums and Chris Keating's cracked and desperate vocal ("You're stuck in my mind, all the time"). He turns it into a solo piano study, the kind you'd find on an ambient CD collection, enhanced only by tiny pitch wobbles and synths as light as air.

Hazel Sheffield, writer

18. Twin Shadow I'm Ready

The evolution of George Lewis Jr continues. As well as leaving 4AD for the major-label glitz of Warners, the LA-based songwriter has dropped the grubbier elements of his sound. 'I'm Ready' follows the shiny pop of December's 'Turn Me Up', and is another sign that third album 'Eclipse' will be totally different to its predecessors. Plinking keys, arena-size drums and handclaps make it radio-ready, but the crackling synths really fizz.

Ben Homewood, Reviews Editor

19. Father John Misty Heart-Shaped Box

To cover Nirvana and not sound like Puddle Of Mudd you need to banish all ambitions of replicating Kurt Cobain's vocals. Father John Misty here strips 'Heart-Shaped Box' back to its bare bones and sings it in a voice that's clean and true. As such, the intense weirdness of lyrics such as "meat-eating orchids forgive no one just yet" and "broken hymen of your highness I'm left back" are presented in all of their unsettling glory.

Tom Howard, Assistant Editor

20. Chromatics Just Like You

Every week until the release of Portland quartet Chromatics' fifth album 'Dear Tommy' next month, the band will be sharing a new track. It's not hard to see why this single was first out of the blocks, a song that multi-instrumentalist Johnny Jewel was "foaming at the mouth to share". With a sweeping intro and gentle vocals from singer Ruth Radelet, its snippets of recorded voices and undulating keys wash over you like a wave.

Andy Welch, writer

TheWeek

► EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS IN MUSIC ■ EDITED BY DAN STUBBS

It really,
really, really
is happening

Blur surprise with first album in 12 years – and another Hyde Park show

8





What did it take for Blur to record their first new album in 12 years? Answer: the cancellation of the Tokyo Rocks festival in 2013, the persistence of Graham Coxon and the Chinese equivalent of Mr Whippy.

The band unveiled their eighth album, 'The Magic Whip', at a packed press conference at the Golden Phoenix restaurant in London's Chinatown on February 19 – Chinese New Year.

Guitarist Graham Coxon explained that the Chinese influence on the album comes from the fact that the initial recordings were all made in Hong Kong during a five-day period that opened up after the cancellation of their Japanese tour date. "We had some downtime," he said, "so we thought we'd find a few days to relocate into a studio to record our stuff there."

While the band didn't finish the album in that time, frontman Damon Albarn said it was Coxon who believed they had the makings of a new record. "Graham came to me and said, 'I think we've got something here.' I was like, 'Brilliant. Go and have a look at it.'"

PHOTOGRAPH

**"I THOUGHT,
'OH NO, THESE
SONGS ARE
REALLY GOOD'"**

Damon Albarn

Albarn thought Blur had "run its course" and was busy with his solo projects, so admitted to "mixed emotions" when Coxon and producer Stephen Street played him back the new material. "I was like, 'Oh no, this is really good.'"

With Coxon having quit the band by the release of 2003's 'Think Tank', his influence will be far more apparent on this record – the first full-group effort since 1999's '13' – although, speaking to *NME* after the press conference, both of the band's songwriters say their relationship on this album was more symbiotic than ever. "There were snatches of [lyrics from the original recordings] that you can grab hold of to get some sort of gist," said Coxon. "It's always been my job to glean what I can from what he's saying and put it through a guitar."

Albarn added: "And then once that happens I've got to go back and finish it. If he's interpreted a word or a sound, it kind of helps finish the words. Basically it's been a really great process this time round. I've never made a record in this way. On this occasion it's worked really well for us. Whether we could repeat it again? Who knows? Probably not."

Albarn completed writing the lyrics for the



Blur announce their first new album in 12 years at the Golden Phoenix restaurant, London, February 19

album by drawing on his visits to Hong Kong and China, and his wider travels, too. One song, 'Pyongyang', deals with his experiences visiting North Korea, and 'There Are Too Many Of Us' is not simply about urban overpopulation. "Probably the initial idea came from being in a very claustrophobic city," he said, "but I actually finished the lyric after having come back from Australia. I was there the day they had the hostage situation in the chocolate shop, which was an extraordinary thing to witness. I was staying in a hotel where I could literally see what was going on outside and watch it on TV. I've never been in that position before, and as a songwriter that was a very interesting standpoint to have: to

be seeing something on TV, and then out the window it's happening. Seeing the reality of what was happening and how it was being distorted through the prism of [the camera] was kind of fascinating."

The album's title "can mean a lot of things, he added. It's a folkloric conceit in traditional Chinese culture. It can be an ice cream. It's a firework. It's also a whip. The whip, for me, was very important because I always have a sense of the hidden control everywhere in China. I love its

multifaceted madness, but you can't help but get the sense of that element of control."

The band also announced that they will headline the British Summer Time festival in Hyde Park on June 20, and Albarn revealed to *NME* that the band will play "gigs around the country prior to that... We're going to play in Wales, in Scotland and in England."

Having cited the new album as "the only reason" they've decided to play live again, Albarn said he'd like to play as much of the new material as possible at Hyde Park, although "we've got quite a few songs that we wouldn't want to not play in a big field like that. There'll be an element of editing the new material to work in context with the old material."

Drummer Dave Rowntree believes the band now has the "challenge of taking the record and transplanting it into the four of us playing live".

Bassist Alex James thinks it won't pose much of a problem, though. "I don't find the idea of that particularly challenging," he said. "It's a really exciting proposition to play live, because it's just the four of us giving it the beans. 2012 was such a triumph, that Olympic show, so how do we take it up a notch from there? Well, here's a bunch of new bangers. Let's have a go." ■ KEVIN EG PERRY



CRACKING THE WHIP

Designer/director Tony Hung on the album sleeve and the 'Go Out' video



Did Blur give you a specific brief for the album artwork?

"I spoke with Damon and he told me what the album was about. He wanted me to come up with something that encapsulated what the album's about, and I made the design from scratch. I had a few different ideas, but the design we've used came together the morning after I first heard the album, which was great. It was a real direct reaction to hearing the record. We wanted to do something that was relevant and progressive."

You also directed the 'Go Out' video – where did the idea come from?

"The band just wanted something that encapsulated the song and the vibe of the record. I shot it and showed it to them, and they liked it."

The video also picks up the ice cream theme from the album artwork – what's the significance?

"That came from Damon. 'The Magic Whip' could be like a magic Whippy ice cream. In Asia it's also

the name of a firework. It's looking at those extremes. The record's quite deep. On the face of it the music is quite fluffy, but there's a depth and darkness to it. You normally think of ice cream as a daytime thing, but here we see it in a different setting: darker and seedier. The ice cream is dribbling, which you never normally see, because it's supposed to be picture perfect. There are lots of opposites going on. They're a western band recording in Hong Kong. There's a lot going on in the record."



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In

bloom

As he goes solo for the second time, The Killers' frontman Brandon Flowers thinks he's found the formula for grown-up, radio-friendly pop



Brandon Flowers, wearing a black leather jacket and grasping a mug of green tea, is stood in the centre of a studio in west London, unable to keep still as he listens back to some of the final mixes for his second solo album. He nods his head to the calypso-influenced beat of 'Still Want You' and grins as the backing singers come crashing in. "*Nuclear distress, I still want you*", they sing. "*Climate change and death, I still want you*". The subject matter may be apocalyptic, but Flowers knows exactly where he wants these songs to end up. "I want to be on the radio," he says. "I've *never* been ashamed to say that."

The Killers' frontman is putting the final touches to his as-yet-untitled new record ahead of its release this spring. It's currently being mixed at Assault & Battery studio in west London by Alan Moulder, who's been working with Flowers since the first Killers album, 'Hot Fuss', back in 2004. A lot has changed since then, and Flowers

knows that today's radio is a very different entity to the one where 'Mr Brightside' first found a home. "I can't believe where radio has gone," he says. "It seems to be such a weird world now. Where I once seemed to fit in, now I'm seen as a little different. I used to be considered mainstream, but now I'm almost avant-garde or art-rock compared to what's on the radio."

His plan for the album was to make a grown-up pop record – one with radio-friendly singles but that also carries some weight and meaning for the long-term fans whose lives, like his, have changed over the last decade. "I'm 33 years old and I have three sons; I've got to try to commit to myself and not embarrass myself," he says. "A lot of these songs could be about a man and his wife. I'm coming up on 10 years of marriage, and it's not a cakewalk."

Flowers took his cues from his heroes: Genesis' Peter Gabriel, The Police's Sting and the Eagles' Don Henley.

He says they showed him how to mature away from the bands that made their names: "I think if you look

"I COULDN'T MAKE A RECORD LIKE THE VOIDZ ALBUM. I'M TOO MUCH OF A POP TART"

Brandon Flowers

at those people, they weren't just catering to little kids. I think adults like pop music too, and we shouldn't be – I'm speaking for all of us – we shouldn't be listening to a lot of that music that we're listening to! There has always been pop music, but it can speak to you too, you know? I think we're walking a line on my new record, and hopefully we've found a place where there's sophistication to it but it also feels accessible."

Having first emerged in the wake of bands like The Strokes and Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Flowers says that he's been listening with interest to the solo records put out by his peers, such as Karen O. He laughs off the suggestion that he could ever make an album as abrasive as Julian Casablancas' recent record with The

The Killers



Flowers in the studio with Haim and Vampire Weekend producer Ariel Rechtshaid



BRANDON FLOWERS ON THREE KEY TRACKS FROM THE NEW ALBUM

'Can't Deny My Love'

"'Can't Deny My Love' was one of those magical songs that just writes themselves. The lyrics were done really fast. There was something instantly authentic about it that was cool. It wasn't contrived at all. Ariel was able to bring a little weight and muscle to my original demo."

'Digging Up The Heart'

"It's a real narrative song. It's about a guy who wants to be better. He's been born into certain circumstances and he's trying to change, and I guess that's left pretty open. You don't know whether he ever turns it around, but you really want him to – and in the meantime it's so much fun."

'Still Want You'

"'Still Want You' is the oldest song that's made it onto this album. It's from the tour for my first solo record. When I played Ariel the demo, he heard something in it that I hadn't quite captured yet. He took it to 2020 or wherever he took it to, rather than being stuck in 1978 where I had it."

Voidz. "I don't know if I have that in me," he says. "It's like Bowie doing 'Tin Machine' or something like that. I just can't... I'm too much of a pop tart."

One contemporary record he does admire is The War On Drugs' 'Lost In The Dream', although he admits he has one problem with Adam Granduciel's work. "I'm with everybody else on the War On Drugs train," he explains, "but I just don't know what the hell he's saying. I just want to turn up the vocals. The vocal melodies are great, and I love what's happening, but I just want to be able to hear the words. I love a song that I can sing along to."

The record will be the follow-up to Flowers' 2010 debut solo album 'Flamingo'. Many critics at the time noted that it sounded a lot like a Killers record, while *NME*'s review argued that it was "more that The Killers' albums sounded like Brandon Flowers solo albums, with a bit of indie guitar on top".

This time round, Flowers wanted to make a conscious effort to explore new territory. With that in mind, he recruited producer Ariel Rechtshaid, who made his name working with the likes of Vampire Weekend and Haim. "I'm so much a part of that Killers sound," Flowers says, "so for me to move away from it I had to give Ariel some freedom, a little bit more slack on the rope. A lot of times it worked, and when it didn't I was able to have a strong enough hold on things to pull the rope and get it where I need to get it."

While Flowers says the image he'll be presenting with the album is still being figured out, there are some clues in the fact that the video for lead single 'Can't Deny My Love' has already been shot in the Nevada desert with actress Evan Rachel Wood and Richard Butler of The Psychedelic Furs. Having dismissed most treatments he got from video directors as "the worst ideas", Flowers decided to set about creating his own adaptation of *Young Goodman Brown*, a short story by 19th-century American writer Nathaniel Hawthorne. "It's a little bit nerve-wracking to go out on a limb when you've had the idea," he says, "but I love the story, so if we get

it right it'll be so cool."

He'll definitely be taking the record on the road, and he'll have a similar touring band to his first solo album. There are already dates in Mexico confirmed, with more worldwide to be announced. He'll also break from his personal schedule to headline a festival in Delaware with The Killers in June. Flowers confirms that whether or not 'The Desired Effect' has the desired effect of getting him back on the radio, he still sees a future for his band. "I like being in The Killers and I'm proud of what we've done," he says. "I believe we still have something to offer." ■ KEVIN EG PERRY

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE

FIVE TOURING ESSENTIALS

Tom McFarland



Jungle



BOOK High Rise by JG Ballard

"He's really great at creating these incredible dystopian views on the future of the Earth and the way that society implodes on itself when you try to create utopia."



DVD BOXSET Breaking Bad

"I've just started watching, so I've got a lot to get through. My friend was shocked I hadn't seen it. It'll be a long road – I'm so late to the party."



FILM Blade Runner

"This is the film I could go back to again and again, because the Vangelis soundtrack's epic and sci-fi's just something I really love. And yes, another dystopia!"

GAME Corsican Battle

"This is a card game we play on tour that our French sound guy taught us. It's basically Snap but much, much more vicious. People end up losing fingernails. The rules of the game are: you can't wear any rings when you're playing. It gets a bit brutal."



HOME COMFORT Marmite

"You need Marmite when you're in Europe, man. Just a couple of jars. And then good teabags when you're in the States."

► Jungle kick off their biggest tour to date at Portsmouth Pyramid Centre (February 17), running until March 6

STAYING IN

THE BEST MUSIC ON TV, RADIO AND ONLINE THIS WEEK

GOING OUT

THE BEST LIVE EVENTS

THIS WEEK



Jarvis Cocker returns to BBC 6 Music on March 1

Jarvis Cocker

Sunday Service

►LISTEN BBC 6 Music, March 1, 4pm

After a one-year sabbatical in which he handed over the mic to a series of guest DJs, including Iggy Pop, the Pulp frontman returns to the airwaves and resumes his 6 Music presenting role. Cocker will bring some of his favourite tracks from his record collection and muse on various topics over the two-hour-long show.

Sex Pistols

Rock And Roll Exposed

►WATCH Sky Arts, February 25, 11.15pm
The Sex Pistols, The Clash, Blondie, the Ramones and more feature in this documentary on the '70s punk scene and the work of legendary rock'n'roll photographer Bob Gruen.

Bad Breeding

X-Posure

►LISTEN XFM, February 25, 10pm
The Stevenage group drop by to shake the studios to the core with their blistering, politically charged punk bullets. Tune in to hear the likes of 'Age Of Nothing' and 'Burn This Flag'.

Jimmy Page

The Radcliffe & Maconie Show

►LISTEN BBC 6 Music, February 27, 1pm

The Led Zeppelin guitarist was the recipient of the one-off Rock'n'Roll Soul award at this year's NME Awards with Austin, Texas. He'll head into 6 Music to talk about his time in the iconic band, specifically the period around 'Physical Graffiti'.



Suede

Live at La Cigale, Paris

►WATCH Sky Arts, March 1, 9pm
Travel back to the 2013 'Bloodsports' tour and watch this year's Godlike Geniuses run through a selection of their classic hits. The setlist features Brett Anderson (left) and co performing the likes of 'Animal Nitrate', 'We Are The Pigs', 'Beautiful Ones' and acoustic versions of 'She's In Fashion' and 'Still Life'.



Sleaford Mods

The Nottingham duo take their fierce, funny, political music out on tour.

►DATES Stoke-on-Trent Sugarmill (February 26), Northampton Roadmender (27), Barnsley The Londoner (28), Wakefield The Hop (March 2), Liverpool Kazimier (3)

►TICKETS £10 from NME.COM/tickets with £1-£1.95 booking fee

Gengahr

London quartet preview forthcoming debut album with two intimate dates.

►DATES Manchester Eagle Inn (February 25), London Waiting Room (26)

►TICKETS Manchester £7 from NME.COM/tickets with 84p booking fee; London sold out

5 TO SEE FOR FREE

1. Father John Misty

Rough Trade East, London
►February 25, 7pm

2. Dutch Uncles

Rise, Bristol
►February 25, 7.30pm

3. Spectres

Pop Recs Ltd, Sunderland
►February 25, 5.30pm

4. Bernard + Edith

Shacklewell Arms, London
►February 26, 8pm

5. Alex G

Pie & Vinyl, Southsea
►March 1, 2.30pm

Telefonica

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48 hours before general release

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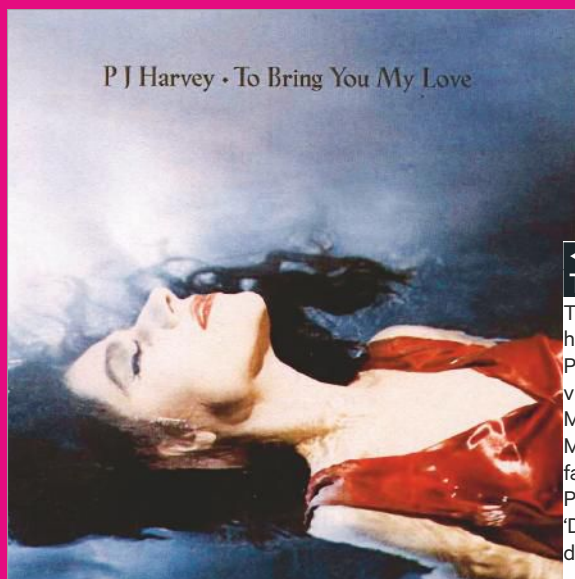


REPLAY

ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM



"IF I NEVER MAKE ANOTHER RECORD, I'D DIE HAPPY WITH THIS ONE"
Polly Harvey



PJ Harvey • To Bring You My Love

STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE

The first two album covers had featured the work of Polly's friend and long-term visual collaborator Maria Mochnac. The 'To Bring You My Love' shot was taken by fashion photographer Valerie Phillips on the set of the 'Down By The Water' video, directed by Mochnac.

THIS WEEK...

PJ Harvey: To Bring You My Love

Twenty years old this month, the musical polymath's atmospheric third album was an artistic breakthrough

THE BACKGROUND

This album, largely written in isolation in Dorset – in the house Polly Harvey bought with the proceeds of her first two records with the PJ Harvey trio (1992's 'Dry' and 1993's 'Rid Of Me') – was not only the confrontational Peel favourite's first real solo record, but also the one on which she really defined herself as an artist able to shatter her own mould, making a commercial breakthrough in the process. She'd suffered a near-breakdown following the success of 'Dry', but this album was the work of a newly confident Polly. So out went the raw, grungy strops and in came a dark, sexual blues, drawing on the work of Nick Cave as well as her beloved Captain Beefheart, with Polly displaying a range of unsettling personas.

FIVE FACTS

1 Harvey set herself a three-month deadline for writing the songs, aiming for an album with a strongly unified sound.

2 Polly disliked interviews so much that she forced NME's Ted Kessler to accompany her on the train to Yeovil for her cover feature, saying that she had to be back home to play Scrabble with her brother. "I like the idea that if I have to suffer doing an interview, then you may as well suffer a bit as well," she said.

3 Harvey only made one public appearance in 1994 – to perform, at Björk's request, a duet with her on The Rolling Stones' ('I Can't Get No) Satisfaction' at the Brit Awards. It's on YouTube.

4 1995 also saw the release of Kathryn 'Hurt Locker' Bigelow's sci-fi thriller *Strange Days*, which features a pre-Licks Juliette Lewis performing the PJ Harvey tracks 'Rid Of Me' and 'Hardly Wait'.

5 This LP saw Polly joined by Mick 'no relation' Harvey, of Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds. In 1995, she recorded 'Henry Lee' from the Bad Seeds' 'Murder Ballads' album with Cave, and began the relationship that inspired much of his 'The Boatman's Call'.

LYRIC ANALYSIS

"What a monster/ What a night" – 'Meet Ze Monsta'

A playful Hammer-horror twist on The Four Seasons' 1975 cheesy disco-pop smash 'December, 1963 (Oh, What A Night)'.

"Long goes the night/ Longer the day/ Teclo, your death/ Will send me to my grave" – 'Teclo'

The title came from 'Teclo's Death', a track on Italian composer Ennio Morricone's soundtrack to the 1968 film *Guns For San Sebastian*; Harvey simply improvised a narrative around it.

"You wanna hear my long snake moan/ You oughta see me crawl my roar/ Is my voodoo working?" – 'Long Snake Moan'

Polly takes on the bluesmen at their own game, assuming a swaggering Bessie Smith sexuality and making reference to Muddy Waters' 'Got My Mojo Working' ("Gonna have all you women right here at my command").

WHAT WE SAID THEN

"The faint-hearts might still feel that she's too extreme, while old fans may mourn the passing of all that claustrophobic awfulness. But mostly, 'To Bring You My Love' is an inspiring rite of passage."
8/10, Stuart Bailie, NME, February 25, 1995

WHAT WE SAY NOW

'To Bring You My Love' is the sound of Polly hitting full power. It's an eerie, atmospheric record that ranges from the horror-vamp of 'Meet Ze Monsta' to the elegiac 'C'mon Billy'.

FAMOUS FAN

"I think ['TBYML'] is brilliant. Polly's got very, very many sides to her. She used to play a brass instrument in an orchestra. Everybody just thinks she's the rock chick, but it's got absolutely nothing to do with that. I think she's going to stick in there for another 50 years, simply doing new things."
Björk

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

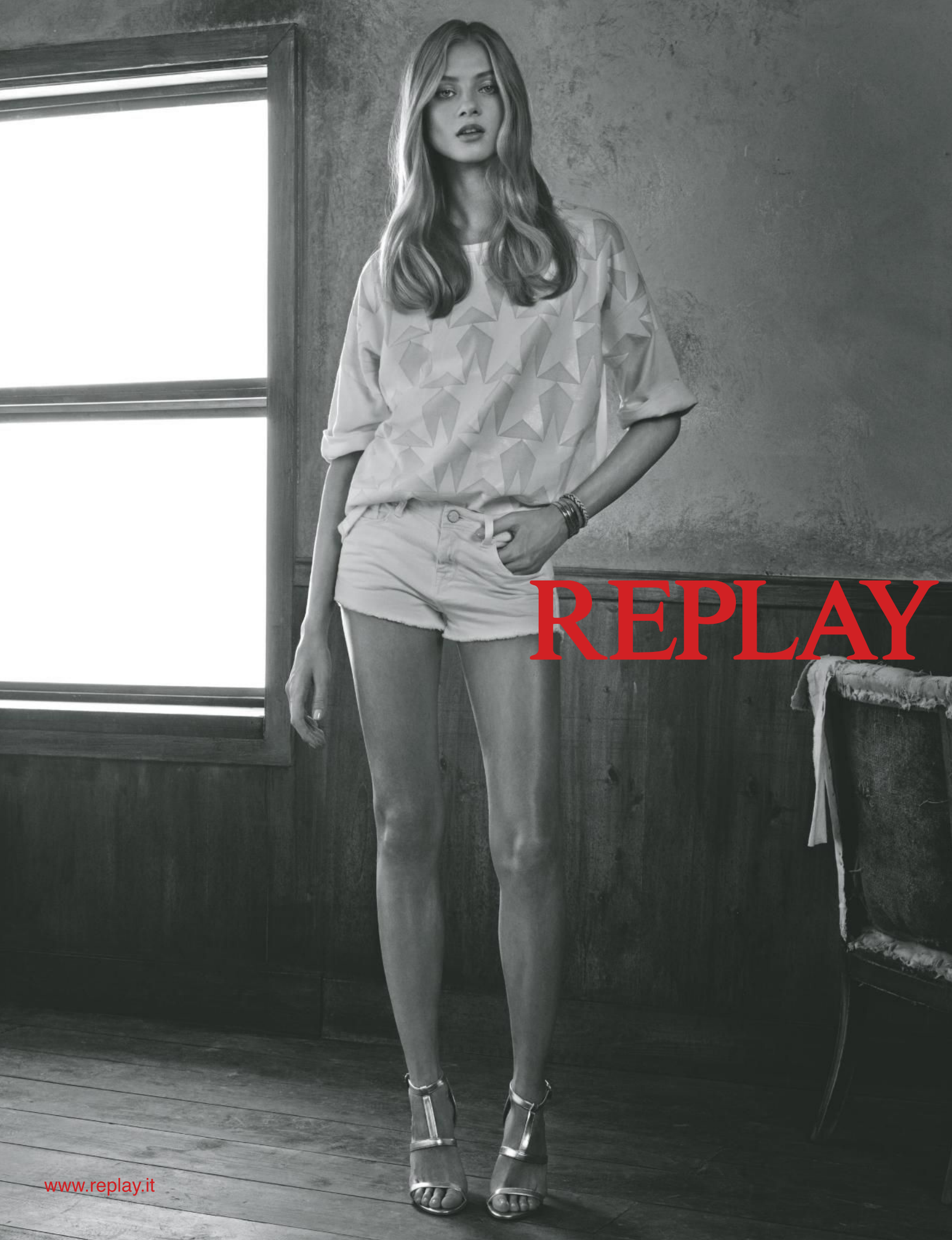
"I think I'm really developing as a songwriter. I know exactly how I want them to sound. I know if I want a note on a guitar played with a paintbrush or a knife... If I never make another record, I'll die happy with this one."

THE AFTERMATH

The album reached Number 12 in the UK chart and Number 40 in the US, going on to win two Grammys, for Best Alternative Rock Performance and Best Female Vocal for 'Down By The Water'. A powerful performance at Glastonbury 1995 marked the start of a shape-shifting period, with 1998's 'Is This Desire?' unveiling a more expansive and melodic side to Harvey.

THE DETAILS

►RECORDED September–October 1994 ►RELEASE DATE February 27, 1995 ►LENGTH 42:27 ►PRODUCERS Flood, John Parish, PJ Harvey ►STUDIO Townhouse Studios, London ►HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION 12 ►UK SALES Certified gold (100,000 copies) ►SINGLES Down By The Water, C'Mon Billy, Send His Love To Me ►TRACKLISTING ►1. To Bring You My Love ►2. Meet Ze Monsta ►3. Working For The Man ►4. C'mon Billy ►5. Teclo ►6. Long Snake Moan ►7. Down By The Water ►8. I Think I'm A Mother ►9. Send His Love To Me ►10. The Dancer



REPLAY

TheWeek NEWSDESK

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I was still going out but something wasn't quite right, I was spiralling a bit. I wasn't making myself happy. I wasn't stable"

Florence Welch describes the "chaotic" year that led to a "nervous breakdown" before making her new album

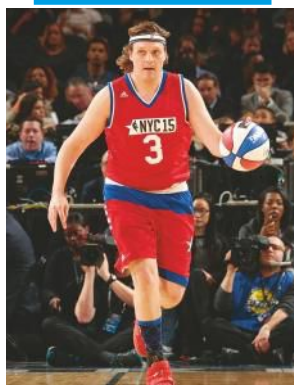
THE NUMBERS

14

Number of months after winning 2013's *X Factor* that Sam Bailey was dropped from Simon Cowell's Syco label

8

Points scored by Arcade Fire's Win Butler during the NBA All-Star Game. His team won the basketball match 59-51.



1 million

Sales of Mark Ronson's 'Uptown Funk' hit the landmark figure last week.

100

Professional songwriters and producers in Sweden who have signed an open letter to Spotify demanding bigger payouts.

WHO THE FUCK IS...



For Pete's Sake

Looking to kill some time during Lent?

Why not visit London's St Marylebone Parish Church, where the Stations Of The Cross exhibition features a cast of a crucified Pete Doherty. The marble sculpture was made by Doherty's friend Nick Reynolds in 2008.

Isn't that sacrilegious?

Not so, says the church's Reverend Canon Stephen Evans: "I hope *For Pete's Sake* might help visitors stop and reflect on what in their own lives leads to death or to life."

What happens after the exhibition closes?

It could be yours – if you have £33,000 lying around.

+ GOOD WEEK +



Lady Gaga

Lady Gaga has announced her plans to marry actor and boyfriend Taylor Kinney after accepting his Valentine's Day proposal. Gaga, who has been with the star of *The Vampire Diaries* since 2011, took to Instagram to flash her engagement bling.

- BAD WEEK -



Madonna

Radio 1 denied that Madonna's new single 'Living For Love' missed out on a playlist spot because she is too old. At 56, they pointed out, she's younger than Paul McCartney who currently has two singles on the playlist. Madonna then, not old – just rubbish.

IN BRIEF

Sparring match

Noel Gallagher says Ukup leader Nigel Farage "doesn't look mentally capable of running a corner shop, far less a fucking country". Note to Channel 4, this is not an idea for a new TV series.

The late late show

Guns N'Roses' Richard Fortus has said that the band are often very late onstage because Axl Rose "goes through a lot to walk out onstage". Maybe they should give him a closer dressing room and stop putting those meshes of invisible death lasers in all the hallways.

Read along if you can

Can Pharrell squeeze any more juice from 'Happy', a song he first released in 2013? The news that it's now being turned into a children's book suggests yes he can!

► Find these stories and more on NME.COM

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS FEBRUARY 22, 2015



Father John Misty I Love You, Honeybear

BELLA UNION

The former Fleet Foxes drummer shares his feelings about love's redemptive power on his second album as Father John Misty, which takes the top spot.

NEW 2	Room 94 Room 94 SHIPWRECK
NEW 3	Hope Is Just A State Of Mind Little Comets THE SMALLEST LABEL
▼ 4	Happy People Peace COLUMBIA
▼ 5	Shadows In The Night Bob Dylan COLUMBIA
NEW 6	Wonder Days Thunder EAR MUSIC
NEW 7	Terraplane Steve Earle & The Dukes NEW WEST
▼ 8	Wanted On Voyage George Ezra COLUMBIA
NEW 9	Smoke & Mirrors Imagine Dragons INTERSCOPE
▲ 10	Lost In The Dream The War On Drugs SECRETLY CANADIAN
▼ 11	Mount The Air The Unthanks RABBLERouser
▼ 12	In The Lonely Hour Sam Smith CAPITOL
▼ 13	X Ed Sheeran ASYLUM
▼ 14	Girls In Peacetime Want To Dance Belle & Sebastian MATADOR
NEW 15	Great Big Flamingo Burning Moon The Wave Pictures MOSHI MOSHI
▲ 16	Uptown Special Mark Ronson COLUMBIA
NEW 17	Man It Feels Like Space Again Pond CAROLINE
▼ 18	Hozier Hozier ISLAND
▲ 19	Royal Blood Royal Blood WARNER BROS
▼ 20	Modern Nature The Charlatans BMG RIGHTS
NEW 21	Live At The Music Hall Phosphorescent DEAD OCEANS
▲ 22	Viet Cong Viet Cong JAGJAGUWAR
NEW 23	Ibeyi Ibeyi XL
NEW 24	Everything Ever Written Idlewild EMPTY WORDS
▼ 25	Matador Gaz Coombes HOT FRUIT/CAROLINE
▼ 26	Stay Gold First Aid Kit COLUMBIA
▲ 27	Wallflower Diana Krall VERVE
▼ 28	1989 Taylor Swift EMI
NEW 29	We Slept At Last Marika Hackman DIRTY HIT
▼ 30	The Endless River Pink Floyd RHINO
▼ 31	No Cities To Love Sleater-Kinney SUB POP
▼ 32	Modern Blues The Waterboys HARLEQUIN AND CLOWN
▼ 33	Liquid Spirit Gregory Porter BLUE NOTE
NEW 34	Vestiges & Claws Jose Gonzalez PEACEFROG
▼ 35	What A Terrible World, What A Beautiful World The Decemberists ROUGH TRADE
NEW 36	Texas 25 Texas PIAS
▼ 37	Chapter One Ella Henderson SYCO MUSIC
NEW 38	Lazaretto Jack White XL
▼ 39	Title Meghan Trainor EPIC
NEW 40	Our Love Caribou CITY SLANG

The Official Charts Company compiles the Official Record Store Chart from sales through 100 of the UK's best independent record shops from Sunday to Sunday.

TOP OF THE SHOPS



THIS WEEK BEATDOWN NEWCASTLE

FOUNDED 2006

WHY IT'S GREAT You'll find everything from black metal to footwork, house to grime.

TOP SELLER LAST WEEK Aphex Twin - 'Computer Controlled Acoustic Instruments Pt 2'

THEY SAY "Unassuming from the outside, but we're actually in a huge labyrinthine basement!"

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE



The Streets



The Strokes



Van McCann

Catfish
And The
Bottlemen
singer

THE FIRST SONG I REMEMBER HEARING 'Beautiful Boy (Darling Boy)' - John Lennon

"I still remember: I was in a washing-up bowl and my dad was washing me, and he had these big, massive headphones on me, bigger than my little baby head. I used to always have 'Beautiful Boy...' on loop, he used to play it to me and cover me in soap."

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH 'Wavelength' (Live At Montreux 1980 version) - Van Morrison

"All his band start playing and he just comes out having a smoke to this massive crescendo of noise, and then he drops his hand and the whole band stop on his cue. I used to watch his DVD every Christmas since I was a kid with my dad - we'd put it on the surround sound and we'd just sit

there and have a drink and watch Van Morrison."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT 'A Grand Don't Come For Free' - The Streets

"It wasn't the first album I ever bought, but I stole 'A Grand Don't Come For Free' off my cousin. He always used to have it on in his house, so I stole it from him and just never

"THE STREETS IS THE REASON I WRITE SONGS"

took it back. That's my favourite album of all time, like, ever. I love it, man - I've listened to it every single day. That's the reason why I get up and write songs. Mike Skinner's so normal and so down to earth, he doesn't write songs about driving off in Cadillacs; he writes songs about sitting here smoking a joint with his girlfriend watching the telly, and that's how real life is."

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO BE IN A BAND

'Lyla' - Oasis

"That's a massive song. When they play that it's 'here comes the chorus, get on me shoulders, it's time, tops off, everything'. I love that song, there's a lyric in it that says 'She's the queen of all I've seen', and I like big powerful one-liners like that."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO 'Christmas Wrapping' - The Waitresses

"I couldn't listen to it anyway, but over Christmas, Larry, my best mate who I've got a cottage with, he played that so many times that I hate that song. I love Christmas, but that song got on my nerves after Christmas 'cos he just kept playing it."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANNA DANCE

'Someday'
- The Strokes

"That's my jam. Whenever that comes on in a club, it's just the right tempo for me. Every shape I throw is spot on for that song's tempo - every beat I catch with the right kind of hip movement. I love that song."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD

'Greek Tragedy'
- The Wombats

"I like that new Wombats song. There's a good line in it which says 'comes up and bangs the sense out of me', and I thought that was quite cool because it was kind of sexual and saying, 'She slaps me out of it if I'm in a bad way'."

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN 'Lots Sometimes' - Glasvegas

"It's on the second record and it's a seven-minute song of just him reeling off lines and lines - it's like a poem. When we play with them, he's got to have the lyrics in front of him - it's just line, line, line with 'lots sometimes' at the end of it. And I wish I'd wrote 'Lyla', 'cos then my mum would have a Jacuzzi - d'you know what I mean?"

THE SONG I WOULDN'T NORMALLY ADMIT TO LIKING

'You Know Me'
- Robbie Williams

"Whoever writes his songs is good. In the video he falls to his knees and he's like, 'Baby I'm drinking' - my dad does that when he's had a drink. He dressed up like a rabbit in the video and starts doing some cartwheels, and that upset me a bit, but other than that, I like that song."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL

'A Catfish And The
Bottlemen song'

"If they played it, then my little lad and his older sister or younger sister or whatever, they could take the royalties and put a nice spread on for everybody. There you go - little buffet for my family and that."



The Wombats

Rad ar

► **LISTEN NOW**
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► **YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST** ■ EDITED BY MATT WILKINSON

NME
NEW
BAND
OF THE WEEK



Pretty Vicious

Welsh foursome meet in a field, play a few gigs and spark a bidding war

It's about time the music scene had a good kick up the arse, because it's fucking shit," says Pretty Vicious frontman Brad Griffiths. "It needs a proper fucking working-class band to be out there again, having some fun."

Pretty Vicious are four teenagers from the Welsh mining town of Merthyr Tydfil, and they're either rock's newest saviours or its latest freeloaders; the next Arctic Monkeys or this year's Strypes. After one song and a handful of gigs it's still way too early to tell, but here's what we know for sure: they formed last March, when the 18-year-old Griffiths, then toiling in a self-described "shit covers band", met drummer Elliot Jones, guitarist Tom McCarthy and bassist Jarvis Morgan at the birthday party of a mutual friend in a field. He proposed starting a "cheeky little side-project," and by the end of the year they'd released 'Cave Song', two-and-a-half minutes of seething small-town frustration that sounded the klaxon for one of the

most hotly contested industry scrums of recent years. Before they'd even played live, they had the biggest managers in the UK camped out on their doorstep. In the end, they shunned them all in favour of Elliot's dad: "I'd rather give our money to someone I know I can trust than some knob from London," says Griffiths.

If the rumours are to be believed, there was plenty of money involved in the deal they eventually signed with Virgin EMI, but the deciding factor "was that they were proper fans of the music... And they fought their hearts out to sign us, bless them." They claim to have 50 tunes, every one of them better than 'Cave Song' (which Griffiths "only wrote for a laugh"), and the first of which – debut single 'It's Always There' – you'll be able to hear this month. "It's about how, no matter where you go in life, how strong or weak, rich or poor you are, there's always certain things that creep up on you," he explains. "And it's got one of the greatest bass intros of all time."

They've still only played eight gigs, all but one of them in Wales, but you won't be able to miss Pretty Vicious over the coming 12 months. "World domination is what comes next," they say, and they're only half-kidding. ■ **BARRY NICOLSON**

► THE DETAILS

- **BASED** Merthyr Tydfil
- **FOR FANS OF** Oasis, Arctic Monkeys
- **SOCIAL** twitter.com/prettyviciousuk
- **BUY IT NOW** 'It's Always There' is released on March 30
- **BELIEVE IT OR NOT** As part of their deal with Virgin, the band were given the original contracts the Sex Pistols signed with the label in 1977. "I couldn't really care if I have them or not, but it's a nice little bit of history," says Griffiths.

▼
ON
NME.COM/
NEWMUSIC
NOW
► Listen to 'It's Always There'

MORE NEW MUSIC

Isle Of Indigo

'Paycheck' is the first that we've heard from hitherto anonymous duo Isle Of Indigo, but it's got us booking ferry tickets. The Isle is full of noises: massive slabs of stabbing synths, stuttering R&B production that breaks into fits of rhythmic clarity and fragile falsetto vocals intoning the difficulty of hustling in the 21st century. Something we can all relate to. Like Jungle's 'Busy Earnin' reimagined through a prism of Hot Chip's wonky disco.

► **SOCIAL** twitter.com/isleofindigo

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/isleofindigo

NME BUZZ BAND OF THE WEEK

Lois

Madrid's emerging lo-fi scene is building momentum thanks to the recent success of Hinds (FKA Deers), and Lois Brea is another member of that crowd making an impression with his dark blues and surf sound. Though he's used to singing in Spanish in his other project, garage band Trajano!, he's emphatic in the English language on 'Before You' and 'Behold (Our Grandeur)', singing about love and strife in his deep, sultry baritone.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/loisband

► **HEAR HIM** loisband.bandcamp.com

Sitcom

Making music by effectively turning the mundane upside-down and inside-out, Jake Lazovick's tunes might sound like a fox running rampage in a teenager's bedroom at first, but given time they become the epitome of controlled, triumphant chaos. 'Drum Set', his latest record, turns clicks, taps and kicks into vibrant happy-go-lucky anthems about getting stuck in traffic and staring at computer screens.



Corners

► **SOCIAL** jakelazovick.tumblr.com

► **HEAR THEM** jakelazovick.bandcamp.com

Corners

Seemingly bursting out of an '80s action-movie parody, Corners shed the cheese on 'Love Letters', taking the emo opening line "I don't want to think about our times together" and slamming some pulsating, retro-futuristic keys all over it. It could sound like a shambles, but it's actually a bit like throwing a *Tron* fancy-dress costume on your favourite punk singer, or writing a song about Sylvester Stallone attending a sci-fi convention. Excellent, in other words.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/cornersca

► **HEAR THEM** corners.bandcamp.com

The Switch

Oslo's The Switch spent nearly five years writing and recording "harmony and solo-heavy '70s-inspired pop" before a leading Norwegian music reviewer named the band's debut album 'Big If' "the hidden gem of the year" at the end of 2014. They've now



Lois

released an ethereal follow-up - 'B For The Beast' is full of almost orchestral layers of engaging rhythms, dreamy "oohs" and fluttering synth melodies, as evinced on whimsical lead single 'Don't Go To Revolver'.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/theswitchoslo

► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/the-switch-oslo

Attendant

Philly's got it going on right now, and Attendant are here to further prove why it's so special. Their new six-track EP 'Sun Room' combines the nerdy, lo-fi charm of Quarterbacks with the melancholic weight carried by most Waxahatchee tunes. 'I Won't Try To Change Your Mind' reinvents their wheel by throwing off-kilter violin into the mix of girl-guy vocal harmonies and gently

finger-plucked guitar. If ever there was music for a freezing early-morning bus ride, this is it.

► **HEAR THEM** attendantphilly.bandcamp.com

Faerground Accidents

Faerground Accidents singer Bomar Faery has a colourful history to match his gold cloaks, silver body paint and smeared pink lipstick. He was apparently admitted to a psychiatric hospital just 48 hours after meeting up with label Louder Than War Records, but that didn't stop them from releasing the Sheffield band's superb "psychotic pop" songs. 'She Makes Me Want To Die' is their

21

BAND CRUSH

Gaz Coombes



Furs

"I'm bringing Furs on tour with me. So I'm excited to see them, and they look really good live as well. The band is cool, the singer Elle has a great voice. They've got quite a dark, brooding rock'n'roll vibe."

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latest emphatic effort, an anthem of scuzzy Britpop guitars spearheaded by Faery's androgynous, Suede-indebted vocals.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/faergroundaccidents
 ► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/faerground-accidents
 ► **SEE THEM LIVE** London The Lexington (May 22)

Beacon

Released on the consistently innovative Ghostly International (Gold Panda, Dauwd), the cathartic new EP from this Brooklyn duo announces them as R&B visionaries. That said, to confine Beacon to one genre would be an injustice, as 'L1' takes in the metallic throb of Berlin techno, the skittering production of electronic auteurs and, yes, the unfiltered emotion of future R&B – eventually falling somewhere between Autre Ne Veut's unique take on electronics and The Weeknd's knack for nailing down human sensations.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/beaconband
 ► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/beaconmusicnyc

Teal

Teal sound like Cold Cave dragging their mopey attitude onto the dancefloor, and that's most definitely

Beacon

a good thing. 'Hard For Me To Focus' is a claustrophobic jam that would feel just as at home in a sweat-soaked club as in the headphones of a mate who's having a melancholic stumble home after a few too many. Smoke-machine synths and a driving guitar line make this tune shimmer with intensity.

► **SOCIAL** twitter.com/teal420
 ► **HEAR THEM** ttl.bandcamp.com

Kinky Love

Recently emerging from self-imposed isolation ("it turns out we like tweaking things") are Chicago four-piece Kinky Love, whose tranquil new single 'Sugar' is the stuff of starry-eyed dreams. It follows their April 2014 'Promise EP', and with delicate electronic soundscapes, catchy percussive rhythms and Xoe Wise's breathy vocals, they create a sound akin to Woman's Hour and early Pet Shop Boys.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/wemakekinkylove
 ► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/kinkylove



Kinky Love

Pink Film

This London group's debut release, 'Pressure', seems saturated with fuzzy, psych-pop vibes. In fact, such is the strength of the track, they might even have nabbed the entire capital's quota of warping, out-of-focus harmonies. After careering around Liverpool a few years ago, they've now settled in the capital, only to re-emerge with a new line-up and this lethargic,

Pink Film



hazy offering, punctuated by frontman Ziyad Al-Samman's sharp melodies.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/pinkfilm
 ► **HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/pinkfilmmusic/pressure

Day Wave

The breezy surface of Day Wave's tracks make it pretty much inevitable that he hails from California, but there's a darkness beneath the sun-drenched exterior of his new track 'Total Zombie', as he muddles through a failing relationship. Reed-thin guitar lines and euphoric Beach Boys harmonies are a tried-and-tested winner, but marry them up with mid-twenties existential angst – as he does on 'Nothing At All' – and you're really onto something special.

► **SOCIAL** facebook.com/daywavemusic
 ► **HEAR HIM** soundcloud.com/day-wave

Radar NEWS ROUND UP

HOWLER GET SPOOKED

Jordan Gatesmith and Ian Nygaard of Howler have both appeared on fellow Minneapolis act Spooky Ghost's new track 'Brooklyn Girls'. The former plays most of the instruments on it, while Nygaard took on production duties. Head to spookyghostband.bandcamp.com to listen.

CLOUD CASTLE CREATE GLACIER

Eerie-sounding Dubliners Cloud Castle Lake, who caused a stir with debut EP 'Dandelion' at the tail end of 2014, return on March 16 with new single 'Glacier', released through Happy Valley Records. The band play an eight-date tour to coincide with the new release.



Black Honey

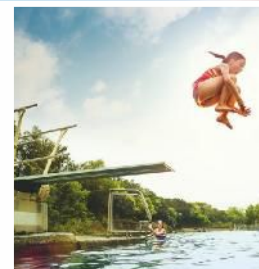
HOME MADE

Mancunian upstarts Man Made are following Twin Peaks' recent lead by asking fans if they can play shows in their houses. Interested? Email manmadehouseparty@gmail.com for more information. Meanwhile, their riff-heavy new single 'Carsick Cars' is set for release on March 9.

BLACK HONEY GET RELIGIOUS

After causing a stir on their recent UK tour – which included a raucous date supporting The Cribs at their NME Awards Show with Austin, Texas – sultry Brighton newcomers Black Honey have premiered new single 'Madonna'. Head over to NME.COM/newmusic to stream the track now.

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AUSTIN, TEXAS: MORE THAN THE MUSIC



(Clockwise from left):
Austin nightlife, X Games,
MotoGP racing, Barton
Springs Pool and the famous
Congress Avenue bats

There's tons to discover in Austin, Texas beyond the brilliant live scene

Austin, Texas might be the Live Music Capital Of The World® but there's plenty more to discover outside of the city's music festivals and venues. From natural beauty to adrenaline-pumping activities, there's so much more going on when the music stops. So what else is there to do in the 11th largest city in America?

BREATHTAKING SCENERY

Austin is surrounded by gorgeous scenery where you can hang out and relax when you've had your fill of watching bands. Take the McKinney Falls State Park, a place famous for its hiking routes along the limestone carved falls of Onion Creek. Or try Zilker Park – the site of Austin City Limits festival and where The Rolling Stones played in 2006 – where the trails are ideal for running or walking while taking in the city views. If you want something more relaxed, take a dip in Barton Springs Pool – a natural spring-fed watering hole – or head to the Lady Bird Lake reservoir on the nearby Colorado River and make the most of the

**The trails are
ideal for taking
in the city views**

kayaks, canoes and paddle boats for hire. Don't forget to check out the world-famous Congress Avenue bridge bats as they come out at dusk.

ADRENALINE-PUMPING SPORTS

The Circuit Of The Americas is the world's newest home for high-performance motorsports. From October 23–25, race enthusiasts flock to the track to watch the Formula 1 United States Grand Prix, while the same venue will play host to the Moto GP on April 10–12. If you're more of a skateboarding and freestyle BMX biking type, you won't want to miss the extreme-sports mayhem of X Games, which takes over the track on June 4–7. College Football is something everyone must experience when visiting Austin, Texas. From August to December, cheer on the Texas Longhorns at the University Of Texas Darrell K Royal Texas Memorial Stadium.

TASTEBUD-TINGLING EATS

There's plenty of food to sample in Austin but make sure you grab some of the city's most famous dishes: BBQ and Tex-Mex. Hit up Guero's Taco Bar for the finest Tex-Mex in the city, La Condesa for a more upscale take on neighbouring Mexico's grub, or Stiles Switch for the most mouth-watering beef brisket, pulled pork and ribs. Movie fans will enjoy Stiles Switch all the more as it was a major location in Richard Linklater's *Dazed & Confused*.

AWESOME MUSIC LANDMARKS

On the shores of Lady Bird Lake is a bronze statue of legendary

local blues guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan, who is credited with reviving blues-rock before his death in 1990, aged 35. Over at ACL Live at the Moody Theater, another local icon is immortalised in sculpture form: 81-year-old country music star Willie Nelson, who's lived in Austin since 1971. Wandering around the city, you'll also find intriguing murals by street artists, including the 'Hi, How Are You' painting by lo-fi musician Daniel Johnston, an image that once adorned a T-shirt of Kurt Cobain's.

GREAT SHOPPING BARGAINS

Want to pick up Texan souvenirs on your trip? Head to Allens Boots for quality cowboy boots, Uncommon Objects for rare antiques, and Eliza Page Jewelry for trinkets and accessories. For everything else, there's The Domain – a giant outdoor mall boasting over 100 luxury and boutique shops.

Austin
– LIVE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE WORLD –

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**BRITISH
AIRWAYS**

With two NME Awards in their pockets, Royal Blood have set off on the most anticipated tour since the early days of Arctic Monkeys. Barry Nicolson heads to Hamburg, Berlin and Glasgow to soak up the mayhem

THERE WILL

ROYAL BLOOD

BEST NEW BAND

SUPPORTED BY **REPLAY**

BEST LIVE BAND

SUPPORTED BY **BEAT CROW**



BE BLOOD

NME AWARDS 2015 *With Austin* — LIVE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE WORLD —

This time last year, Royal Blood were preparing to set off on the NME Awards Tour 2014, where they were a humble third on a bill headlined by Interpol – the raw, unreconstructed meat in a Temples-Circa Waves sandwich. They were mere contenders back then. Tonight, they're standing on a stage with Jimmy Page, the Lord Of The Riffs himself, who's telling a reverent O2 Academy Brixton about how honoured *he* is to be receiving an award from *them*, and how he "trusts so much" in what Mike Kerr and Ben Thatcher are doing. Tonight, they officially make the step up to heavyweights.

"I was incredibly touched by what Jimmy said," a shocked-looking Mike Kerr says, clutching his newly won award for Best Live Act. "I was very, very moved by it. I know he's said nice things about us before and everyone's read about it, but when you're actually there and he's saying it... the feeling is just absolutely electric."

Tonight is a triumph for Royal Blood, of that there's no question. From the pile-driving rendition of 'Figure It →

Mike Kerr and
(right) Ben
Thatcher wield
their brace of
NME Awards

DEAN CHALKLEY

Out', which opened the show, to their never-in-doubt victory in the Best New Band category, to their wresting of Best Live Act from heavy hitters including Kasabian, Arctic Monkeys and Foo Fighters, the story of the night is the story of their ascension to the big leagues.

"We've never actually won anything before," grins Kerr, a little sheepishly. "Ultimately, winning awards isn't what motivates us to write a good song, but what does feel great is to be acknowledged amongst these people who we really respect. Take this award, Best Live Act – I'm really grateful for it, but I couldn't honestly say that I think we're the best live band. Every one of those other artists is incredible. Once we've swallowed the concept of being acknowledged, the winning doesn't make that much difference. That sense of pride – we've already got that just from being nominated. The winner could've been any one. For us, it's more about being considered amongst those people."

Royal Blood have earned their place in the firmament. The question now is: what will they do with it?

26

A month before all the Awards madness, Royal Blood are in Hamburg on an inauspicious, drizzly afternoon.

It's unlikely they'll pitch up anywhere quite like Große Freiheit 36 again on this tour. The venue is situated just off the Reeperbahn – the city's notorious red-light district. Outside there are peep shows, strip clubs, sex museums and burlesque theatres; the dingy downstairs bar, meanwhile, is where the pre-fame Beatles first honed their live act, subsisting on a diet of cheap beer and slimming pills that kept them awake for days at a time.

Die sündigste meile ('the sinful mile') is mostly deserted at this hour, but the 1,200-capacity upstairs room is so busy you can barely draw breath. Here, as in the UK, Royal Blood's crowd is a curious mix of kids and middle-aged rockers: the former enraptured by the shock of the new; the latter seduced by the lure of the old. Come showtime, it's pan-generational bedlam, with the young and not-so-young alike losing their shit. Royal Blood are very much not just a British phenomenon; a fan spots their PR's tour laminate and pleads to get the band to autograph his copy of their album. "Can you get them to write, 'Howlin' Wolf, Led Zeppelin, Royal Blood?'" he asks. "You know why, yes? You understand?"



Royal Blood kickstarted the NME Awards and (above) presented Jimmy Page with his Rock'n'Roll Soul award

While the fan's intentions are clear, Mike Kerr and Ben Thatcher would be the last people to place themselves in that lineage. Triumphalism simply isn't their style.

Backstage after that night's show, Thatcher is wandering around, dutifully making sure everybody has a drink in their hand. Once he's distributed bottles of beer and cider around the room, he proudly shows off a series of watercolour portraits he's done on tour – his bandmate, Winnie the Pooh, the Mona Lisa and his "personal favourite", Kanye West. Apparently, he sold one to a fan the other day for €20; his manager expresses interest in buying the Kanye, but is put off by the €50 asking price.

Royal Blood can be a vexing band to interview, because you naturally assume they would be enthralled, or overwhelmed, or even mildly traumatised by everything that's

happened to them over the last year, and they're just... not. Instead, they are frighteningly well adjusted.

"We don't particularly feel any different from anyone else," insists Mike, who wears a permanently quizzical expression. "We don't get recognised unless we're outside our own show. We can still go to the shops. I like to think that our music is more popular than our faces, which is a good thing. I'd be a bit concerned if someone came up and said, 'Oh, you're that famous guy... what do you do again?' That's when you know that you've got things the wrong way around. I'm really not interested in becoming a celebrity."

Money holds no great allure for them either: Mike claims not to know how much he's worth these days but says he doesn't even own the shirt on his back (it's borrowed from a crew member), "so you do the maths". Ben, meanwhile, says their most extravagant purchases

ROYAL BLOOD'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES

BEST NEW BAND

Ben: "The things you could do with this award... No, seriously, thank you to everyone who's supported us this year. It's been amazing."
Mike: "Thank you to everyone who voted as well, that's great. We've never really been to anything like this before, so we're not really sure how to behave, but I think 'thank you' is a great start, so cheers."

BEST LIVE BAND

Ben: "Well, I'd like to thank the rest of the band for this award."
Mike: "Thank you."
Mike: "I'm not sure if we entirely agree with the result of this award, but nevertheless, thank you very much. Cheers."

to date have been “bass strings and petrol”. Every so often, however, excursions into the world of celebrity are unavoidable. Back in November, for example, they played the MTV Europe Music Awards in Glasgow to a television audience numbering in the hundreds of millions, sharing a stage with people like Ed Sheeran, Ariana Grande and Nicki Minaj. They weren’t exactly thrilled at the prospect.

“When we showed up to that,” remembers Mike, “I was the one who was like, ‘Oh man, what are we even *doing* here?’ But it was Ben who pointed out to me, ‘No, playing alongside all these pop acts is actually great for us.’ That was when I realised that there’s no point in us just preaching to the converted. I’ve no idea if anyone watching even knew who we were, but it felt good to be gatecrashers. It felt good to be the big sore thumb.”

Also on the bill that night were U2, and on returning to their dressing room the pair found a handwritten summons to their inaugural ‘Bono talk’. “He’d slid this note under our dressing room door, so we went to go and find him to say hello,” laughs Mike. “It was actually pretty funny: I was sat watching my mate Ben from Rustington chatting to Bono for half an hour. I don’t even know what they were talking about; I decided that I liked the mystery of not knowing. I just sat there watching them, thinking to myself ‘This is brilliant.’ Then I went over and chatted to The Edge for a bit, but I wasn’t really sure how I should address him...”

Mike’s momentary etiquette-dilemma (is it Edge or Dave?) aside, Royal Blood are unfazed by the presence of rock royalty. They’ve hosted Jimmy Page in their dressing room in New York, gone

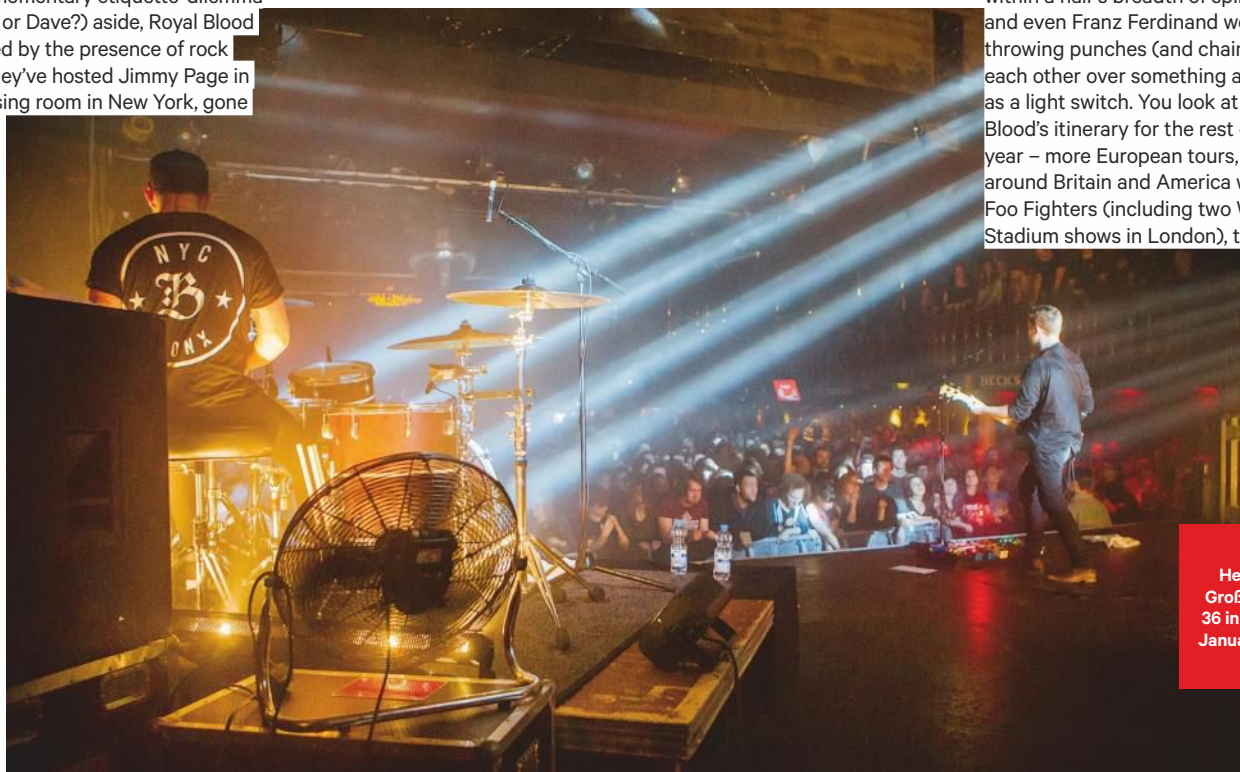
BEN PROUDLY SHOWS OFF A WATERCOLOUR HE’S DONE OF KANYE

on a private tour of San Francisco with Lars Ulrich, been called “the future of riff-rock” by Tom Morello and had Dave Grohl – who invited them on tour with Foo Fighters this summer – sing their praises. They roll their eyes when the ‘saviours of rock’ stuff gets thrown around by journalists, but when it’s coming from people whose music they grew up listening to, surely it carries an extra weight?

“I don’t think they expect us to do anything, other than carry on with what we’re doing,” says Mike. “Having met our idols, we’ve come to realise that they’re not made of gold. They’re just regular people who had a similar thing happen to them a long time ago. When we made our record, it was done in an environment where we were convinced that no-one except our friends would hear it, and it’s taken us this far, so I don’t think we’re about to start adhering to anyone’s expectations.”

After Hamburg, I follow the band to Berlin, where you might expect the crowd to be a little more standoffish. In fact, the scene here is pretty much identical to the night before: once the lights go down, it takes until roughly the first chorus of ‘Come On Over’ for any remaining agnostics to be converted. The setlist is also unchanged, but over the course of 12 months during which they’ve barely been off the road, Mike and Ben have built the perfect live beast, one which requires minimal fine-tuning from gig to gig. They’re onstage for 50 expertly paced minutes that are lean, indomitable and punishingly loud. There are no encores. Theirs is a machine designed to run and run.

Which is just as well, really. Spend any amount of time with Royal Blood and their love for doing this night after night quickly becomes apparent. They’ve played somewhere in the region of 130 gigs in the last 12 months, but for Ben “those 130 gigs were the 130 greatest moments of last year”. Mike, meanwhile, claims that they “don’t even like going home. We just want to play every single night.” Any new band in their position would, but there are cautionary precedents to consider: their mates Arctic Monkeys didn’t make it to album number two without losing a founder member; by the end of the ‘Is This It’ tour, The Strokes had come within a hair’s breadth of splitting up, and even Franz Ferdinand wound up throwing punches (and chairs) at each other over something as trivial as a light switch. You look at Royal Blood’s itinerary for the rest of the year – more European tours, jaunts around Britain and America with the Foo Fighters (including two Wembley Stadium shows in London), the



Headlining
 Große Freiheit
 36 in Hamburg,
 January 11, 2015

ANDY FORD, DEREK BRENNER

Live at Glasgow
Barrowland,
February 22,
2015

inexorable run of summer festivals culminating with Reading And Leeds – and wonder whether Mike might feel rather differently by the end of it.

“I don’t think that’s ever the band’s worry,” he grins when I ask if he’s concerned about burnout. “There’s always a part of you that goes, ‘Fuck it, let’s play Wembley!’ But we’re making sure we don’t rush into things. I don’t know if there’s any way you could orchestrate what’s happened to us. You can only try to control it.”

Two of the people caught up in Royal Blood’s uncontrollable ascent are Lauren Pole and Amy McKethnie, both 15.

I find them camped outside Glasgow’s Barrowland for the first night of Royal Blood’s UK tour, the Sunday after the NME Awards with Austin, Texas. Huddled together under a duvet in the pouring rain with only a multipack of crisps by way of sustenance, it’s early afternoon when I meet them but they’ve already been here for hours. Tonight is their first Royal Blood gig. “We tried to get tickets for the last tour but they sold out so quickly,” says Lauren. “For this one I set about a million alarms and got up really early on the morning they went on sale. I wasn’t missing them again.”

What is it about this band that makes them worth waiting for all day in the rain? “Because they’re different from all the other bands out there right now,” says Amy. “They’re heavier than most of the music we’re into, there’s something special about them. It’s hard to explain, but they’ve got something that no-one else does.”

That indefinable something is in full effect when Ben from Rustington and his mate Mike from Worthing finally

take to the stage, a little after 9pm. At this point, I’m pretty familiar with Royal Blood’s show, but the spectacle is no less impressive for it: a few days ago Jimmy Page had likened it to “lava coming from a volcano”, and Barrowland feels close to erupting tonight. They even throw a couple of surprises into the mix, with B-side ‘One Trick Pony’ and their searing version of T Rex’s ‘20th Century Boy’ both given live debuts. “Fucking hell, this is insane,” says Kerr, catching his breath. “It’s really escalated, hasn’t it?”

It really has. The duo have recently started working on new songs during their soundchecks, but they won’t get properly stuck into the second album until after Reading And Leeds in August; it’s dizzying to think about where things might have escalated to by then. “When we did the first one, we didn’t even know if anyone was going to hear it,” says Mike. “We never even thought people would come to the shows. We made that record with no expectations about anything; we were just doing it for the sake of doing it.

Now, we’ve had the experience of touring and playing and meeting all these incredible people, so if anything I’m feeling confident about the second album.”

Of course he is. Royal Blood might be living in a whirlwind of awards and pipe-dreams come true, but they’re also the calm at the centre of it. There’s no stopping this juggernaut of theirs – either climb on board, or get out of the way. ■

“They only want to play with bands they love, and that’s a great thing”

Royal Blood’s hand-picked tour buddies recall the experience

BECCA MACINTYRE
Marmozets



“We played a festival in France with them and we hit it off straight away. They’re both very loving and caring boys, proper English gentlemen, but they’re also quite different. Ben’s married, and he’s an amazing husband for someone so young, but they know how to enjoy themselves, too. At the Brighton Dome gig we played with them, we all went out for food and started drinking a little too early. That gig felt like Christmas Day.”

CHRIS GEORGIADIS
Turbowolf



“Mike had been a fan of Turbowolf for a few years; he came to see us play at The Haunt in Brighton just before he started Royal Blood. He was in the moshpit that night, then two years later we’re playing sold-out shows with them! Our album producer Tom [Dalgety] had just started doing stuff with Ben and Mike – he mentioned Mike was a big fan and that’s when I realised I knew him from meeting him at the merch table after gigs.”

CHRIS GLITHERO
Zico Chain



“We first knew Royal Blood as guys in the crowd – Benji was a big Zico Chain fan. I think I might have signed his chest once after a show! They’re both very intelligent, switched on and motivated, but they like a party – we did a lot of drinking with them out in Australia. They definitely don’t pick their support bands to sell tickets. They only want to play with bands they love, and that’s a great thing. I also built Mike’s pedalboard. It’s nothing too clever, but even though I built it, I can’t make it sound like Mike does!”

MICHAEL SHUMAN
Mini Mansions



“To us, they’ve been nothing but generous and supportive – the last shows we did with them, they would be watching our set from the side of the stage most nights. As a support band, you can’t really ask for more than that, especially when they’re about to go to work in half an hour’s time.”

**“FUCKING
HELL, THIS
IS INSANE”**

MIKE KERR

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A photograph of the four members of the band Kasabian. They are standing in a white room, posing with their arms outstretched. The member on the far left is holding a large, golden trophy that is shaped like a hand with the index finger pointing up. The member on the far right is also holding a similar trophy. The other two members are standing in the middle, looking towards the camera. They are all wearing dark clothing, except for the member on the right who is wearing a white t-shirt with the letters 'ta' on it and a long, beaded necklace. The overall mood is celebratory and confident.

KASABIAN

BEST ALBUM

48:13

BEST BRITISH BAND

SUPPORTED BY *Marshall*



Kasabian (l-r):
Chris Edwards,
Ian Matthews,
Tom Meighan,
Serge Pizzorno

How was your night?

Serge Pizzorno: "We've had a great night. The last few Awards we've played, so it's been nice to just get on it tonight. This is what it's about, to me. It's like the '70s again. It's about like-minded people coming together and getting high off music."

Tom Meighan: "I was proud of what I said in my speech tonight. I said what needed to be said. I paid homage to our band. I used to buy *NME* before we went to band practice. I said one day we'd do it. And here we are."

Best Album and Best British Band are the two awards you want to win really, aren't they?

Tom: "It's down to Pizzorno. This guy here is the most amazing songwriter. He's a genius. I can't put into words how much I love him. It winds me up, because he needs more recognition. It does my head in, because this guy is empire."

Serge: "Give me a kiss."

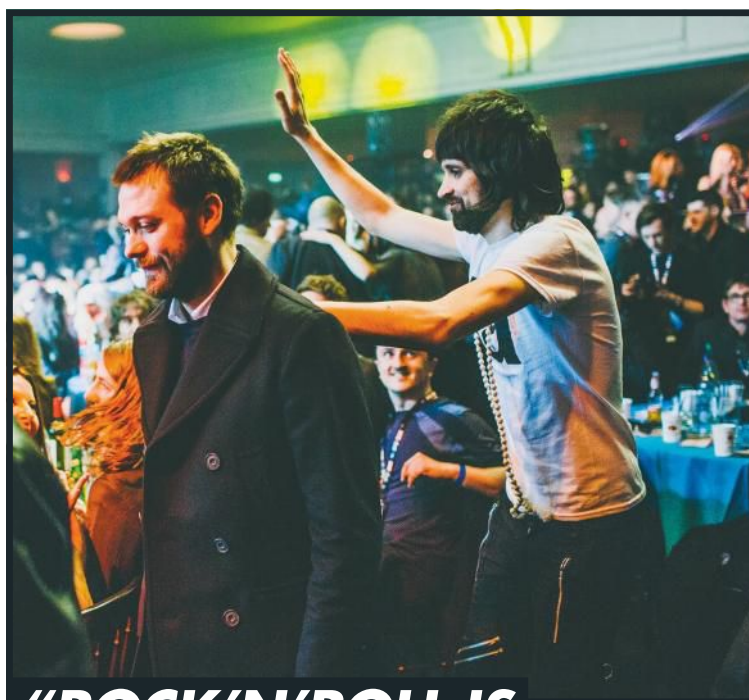
Tom: "He works so fucking hard. He's Pete Townshend. I'm Roger Daltrey. He's Paul, I'm John. I'm Mick, he's Keith. It's that simple."

Serge, you also won the best quote award for saying about your Glastonbury headline slot: "Five records, 10 years. We've earned our shot."

Tom: "Of course we fucking have. Rock'n'roll is on its arse, but it will find a way. It might be us who finds the way. I remember when Sergio first came to me when I was 16 or 17 years old and said, 'Do you want to be in my band?' I'm 34 now."

Serge: "No you're not. You're 27."

Tom: "I'm not going bald just yet. But the thing is – I don't know if there's any



"ROCK'N'ROLL IS ON ITS ARSE, BUT IT WILL FIND A WAY"

TOM MEIGHAN

of that going on any more. I may be a bit drunk, but it feels like we won the war."

Did it feel like you were fighting in the trenches?

Tom: "No, it never did because I came out and started doing stupid interviews back when I was 22 or 23. But me and Serge have grown up together. I'm 34 and I've got kids now."

Does that change how you think about making music?

Tom: "Of course it does. It changes everything, but we still have the same passion inside of us. Serge inspires

me. We've had fights and fell out, loads of shit. When you're in a band with someone for 15 years, like me and Serge have, you do everything together. We've cried. We've screamed. We've argued. We've had sex together."

Serge: "Have we? When was that?"

Tom: "Well, we have watched porn together. No, I'm joking. Except about the sex part. Look at him. He knows. He's guilty."

Serge: (Laughs)

Tom: "Anyway, it doesn't matter about any of that. I'm fucking joking, of course. What it's about is coming here and being among bands like there are here tonight. We just met James Dean Bradfield. What a band Manic Street Preachers are. They're an activist band, and you can't get a bigger one than them. I know my shit."

What do you think of Royal Blood opening the show tonight? Are you fans of their stuff?

Tom: "They're wonderful. Ben Thatcher came over to me earlier and said that he was inspired by 'Club Foot', and that means a lot to me." ■ KEVIN EG PERRY

ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES

BEST BRITISH BAND

Tom: "What can I say, we're very humble, very privileged and proud to win this award, because we've been together a long fucking time – since we were 16 years old – so yeah, we fucking won. Thank you, *NME*, for supporting us, thank you. You know what really matters at the end of the day is here, the heart – the heart always wins. Thank you, *NME*, and God bless you, we love you, goodnight. Thank you. Take care of yourselves and each other."

BEST ALBUM

Serge: "This is for my missus for putting up with my shit. If it wasn't for you I wouldn't be stood here right now. I love you. All you fucking dickheads up there, I can't hear you – give me some fucking noise! I said give me some fucking noise!"

Tom: "Thanks very much. (Sings) 'Come on, Eileen... I'd take everything'. Come here, Kevin, come here."

Kevin Rowland, Dexys: "That was a long time ago – we're in the present now."

Tom: "This one's for Peter Crouch and for my missus back home, I love you. Thank you, *NME*, goodnight."

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



KYLE FALCONER,
THE VIEW

"Fucking brilliant band. We were signed to the same label, then we got too fucked up and had to watch ourselves, but they were getting more fucked up than us."



DEAN CHALKLEY, POONEH GHANA



JAMIE T

BEST TRACK
ZOMBIE

BEST VIDEO
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BEST MUSIC MOMENT
SECRET READING & LEEDS COMEBACK SHOW

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'Carry On The Grudge' and the comeback came after quite a dark period for you – does it feel like a validation to have your return named the Music Moment Of The Year?

Jamie T: "I dunno about that, but it does make you feel welcome. It's nice to be back around, and I've had a lot of support from my friends in bands. It's great to see everyone tonight, after the year I've had really – to reconnect with everyone and to say thank you to

them for giving me the confidence to get back into the fold again."

A lot of 'Carry On The Grudge' felt like you were quite uncertain about who you were as a songwriter, trying to figure out a new direction...

"Kind of, but I knew who I was when I was younger, but I didn't know where I was gonna take it any more. But I think that's the fun in music, isn't it – the journey is meant to be the thing. So as

"IT'S GREAT TO RECONNECT AND SAY THANK YOU"

JAMIE T

for kind of defining the sound, I'm not sure I'm that keen to do that, actually. At the moment, I don't feel any closer than I was before I made this album to discovering what it is... but that's the adventure, I hope."

You've been writing new stuff, then?

"I write all the time, yeah, but it's hard for me to say how much I've written, because I haven't been in the studio. I've got loads of stuff, but it might just all be bits and pieces. I kind of have to record to know if I've got anything. So yes I do, but I don't."

After you recorded the video for 'Zombie', did you keep your makeup on for a while afterwards, scare a few people?

"I wish I had, but it was the hottest day of the year, and we'd been in our makeup for 12 hours or something. So no, I wish I'd gone down the pub or something but we were all so tired by the end of the day, everyone was like: 'GET THIS OFF MY FACE!'"

Do you think zombies are played out now? Or do you still have time for them?

"Oh, I dunno, I've got a bit of time for zombies, as much as anyone does. I quite like the comedy stuff, though, to be honest, the *Shaun Of The Dead* kind of stuff. But I think there's time for zombies."

What's been the best thing you've seen so far tonight?

"Serge. Running around on the stage like a maniac. Has to be the best thing I've seen tonight."

If you could instigate a new category for the awards, what would it be?

"It'd just be Serge. Serge of the year. And it'd be Serge every year."

Finally, what was your own moment of the year?

"We did two nights at Alexandra Palace, which was really daunting but really fun. And the feeling afterwards was great, you know." ■ EMILY MACKAY

DEAN CHALKLEY



JIMMY PAGE +

RUN THE JEWELS

PHOTO DEAN CHALKLEY



JAMIE T +

FLORENCE WELCH

PHOTO DEAN CHALKLEY



KASABIAN +

DYNAMOO

PHOTO DEAN CHALKLEY



CHARLI XCX

PHOTO DEAN CHALKLEY

JAKE BUGG

BEST SOLO ARTIST

SUPPORTED BY 



Congratulations, Jake. You were up for this award last year but lost out to Lily Allen. How does it feel to be taking home the prize tonight?

"It feels like... extra baggage! No, it's always nice to be nominated and it doesn't matter if you win or not – it's not about awards. It's just nice to go out, have a few drinks and have a bit of fun. That's what nights like this are about, really."



You were up against some stiff competition in this category – were you surprised to win or were you always confident?

"I was surprised – I was up against some strong competition tonight – they all do their own thing, but those people have been around since before I even put a record out, so for me it's an honour just to be in that line-up."

How are you planning on celebrating your win?

"I'm not sure – I don't wanna go too mad tonight, to be honest, because it's my birthday soon. I'm gonna be 21 – I can finally have a beer in the States!"

You said last summer that you'd been playing some new songs to Rick Rubin for album number three – how's it coming along?

"It's coming along alright, man. I've locked myself away from the world

Kaiser Chiefs' Ricky Wilson presented Jake Bugg with his award

a bit – I've been out in the countryside, in Oxfordshire, writing songs for it. I haven't decided who I'm gonna be working with yet; I haven't really played them to anyone yet. It's been a bit weird going from being really busy to having nothing to do!"

What's it shaping up to sound like?

"You just write the songs and you let what's gonna happen happen. That said, of the songs I've written so far, I do think they're shaping up to be quite different from my first two albums – the lyrical content certainly won't be the same, because of all the experiences I've had over the last couple of years. As I get older, hopefully it's gonna change and progress. I've noticed that a few of the songs I've been writing have been quite dark – I don't know why, but the thing with songwriting is that whatever comes out, comes out."

You didn't put a record out last year but you did play your share of massive gigs – what was your personal highlight of 2014?

"Playing at the same time as Metallica at Glastonbury, going on before Arctic Monkeys at Reading and Leeds, T In The Park. To be so high up on those festival line-ups was surprising to me – I couldn't ask for much more than that. Well, I suppose I *could* ask to be headlining, but at this stage in my life that's the best I could possibly do."

So headlining's the next step?

"Well, yeah! I don't want to be a sub-headliner and go *down*, do I? I've gotta keep going up!" ■ BARRY NICOLSON

"TONIGHT I WAS UP AGAINST STRONG COMPETITION"

JAKE BUGG

SUEDE

GODLIKE GENIUS

There must have been a period, before the reformation, where you didn't think you'd ever get this sort of posterity award.

Brett Anderson: "Yeah, I think 10 years ago or something like that. We were very far away from getting that kind of recognition when we split up in 2002..."

Mat Osman: "No-one really minded."

Brett: "And we didn't mind either, because we'd made a poor album and that's when bands should split up, I think, when they fuck up like that, rather than keep inflicting things on the general public. But I think reforming in 2010 and the shows we played, and especially 'Bloodsports', put us back on the map, which was lovely."

You played a new song tonight!

Brett Anderson: "We just thought, fuck it, why not, we're playing lots of old songs and to give it a kind of contemporary flavour we'll play something new rather than just keeping it as a sort of time-capsule event."

Mat: "It's quite untypical of anything we've written. It's just got one of those Suede choruses. I guarantee that by the time the second chorus kicks in, people will be singing it."

Brett: "We're calling it 'What I'm Trying To Tell You', but that might change."

You spoke about 'Bloodsports' being like a new debut... With the new songs

you're writing, do you feel more free to branch out?

Brett: "Yeah, with 'Bloodsports' we had to say, 'This is what we do; this is the essence of Suede', and with this, it's like a band's second album. It's a step away from that and it has more freedom as a record – it's less self-conscious. There's lots of quite long musical passages on it."

Mat: "Yeah, the record, once it's done, will probably have the least of your voice on of any Suede record. It's difficult to say, but it's sounding pretty great at the moment."

When do you feel at your most divine?

Brett: "Onstage is literally the only time. That's the closest you come to deification – when you're up there, that kind of weird, surreal power-flow between you and the audience. When it clicks, it's an amazing piece of chemistry, and that's why bands keep on playing, to get that fix back over and over again. So that's the only time."

Mat: "Yawning up in the morning. God, I feel like Zeus..."

Brett: "Despite the image people might have of me."

"BEING ONSTAGE IS THE CLOSEST THING TO DEIFICATION"

BRETT ANDERSON

Mat: "Up in the morning, bowl of cornflakes, smite someone with a thunderbolt..."

Brett: "Sit in a chair in the sky..."

Someone went on Mastermind to answer questions about you last year. That must have been a weird godlike moment.

Brett: "That was surreal, yeah."

Mat: "You sometimes feel that you exist in a bubble of

THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



JARVIS COCKER, PULP

"We played with Suede in the old days. I remember one concert at The Underworld in Camden, they were on before us and they blew us off. They had very good shirts on."



Suede: (l-r)
Simon Gilbert,
Neil Codling,
Richard Oakes,
Brett Anderson,
Mat Osman

It must be great to get the award from Bernard Sumner in particular...

Brett: "It's absolutely brilliant. As an 18-year-old kid I was listening to 'Unknown Pleasures' on repeat in my bedroom... It's really lovely having him present the award."

Mat: "His two bands virtually invented independent music, in terms of just bloodymindedly doing what you want to do, making records the way you want to make them. They started off hardly being able to play and they created an entire world. One of the reasons why we used Peter Saville for sleeves was that he'd created this absolute monolith for them. They're real Godlike Genius."

Who do you see coming up who might be the deities of the future?

Brett: "It's hard to predict... it's all about careers, isn't it? And careers are such hard things to predict. You can see bands that make great records, but that's not quite the same thing."

Mat: "I'm interested in people who do unlikely things. I really like Perfume Genius and I love that record because it's not the kind you'd make if you were trying to have a career or become a Godlike Genius. Because music has become a career. That's probably the biggest change from when we started... now it's got a career path, qualifications and stuff. I like people who do it because they have to, because they'd be ludicrous at doing anything else. They're always the most interesting."

Brett: "My favourite band of recent years is Interpol. If I had to pick someone after Suede, I'd pick Interpol." ■ EMILY MACKAY

people who are into the band, and then you realise that there's a whole world out there that you're actually part of, so it is very odd. There are serious individuals with houses and academic qualifications who spend some time thinking about who produced Suede B-sides... God bless 'em."

Brett: "That's 'cos you've got it in your mind that a typical Suede fan is some kid who's just finished their A-levels. And they're not like that any more. They're heads of multinational companies."

Do you see new younger fans down the front these days?

Brett: "We had an amazing moment when we toured Japan. This girl came up to us after the gig and she was about 18 or something. And she said, 'This is my second Suede concert. The first time I saw you was in 1993. And we were like, what? 'Yeah, I was in my mother's womb'. And that was lovely, because she was a huge fan. So yeah, there does seem to be a new crop of people that get into the band, which is nice."



SUEDE LIVE

Never in the history of Godlike Geniuses have the recipients hit the stage looking so darned young. Brett Anderson leaps around the stage to 'Animal Nitrate', his tongue lapping his lips like a lascivious panther. He pounces onto the monitors during 'Metal Mickey' bawling lines about meat and glitter. Throughout the sweaty sex riffs of 'Filmstar' he squirms and wriggles like a snake in satin. For 'Trash' he's on his knees at the stage's brim, yowling into the faces of the front row about the glamour of being hated.

Suede are arguably the most energised, contemporary and alive GGs we've ever had. They're a band that can open their acceptance set with a B-side as seminal as any of their hits – a sensational 'Killing Of A Flashboy' – and drop in a new song called 'What I'm Trying To Tell You' from the second album of their acclaimed comeback that, with its Gallic elegance and swirling, amorphous noise squalls, sounds as immaculately filthy as the rest of this drive-by greatest-hits set. ■ MB

SETLIST
'KILLING OF A FLASHBOY'
'METAL MICKEY'
'FILMSTAR'
'WHAT I'M TRYING TO TELL YOU'
'ANIMAL NITRATE'
'TRASH'

God to god

2005 Godlike Genius recipient Bernard Sumner presented Suede's award



What is the essence of Suede's divine spark?

"I think they're the real thing. They've got a kind of integrity to the music, and I think Brett's vocals are really cool, he can do those vocal gymnastics."

As a Godlike Genius yourself... "It's an exclusive club. Becoming less exclusive as the years go by. Just by the rules of mathematics."

...do you have any godly advice to pass on?

"Just make sure you're enjoying it. If you're not enjoying it, don't fucking do it. Do it so that every gig feels like the first gig you ever did. It's about pleasure – it's not business."

TEENAGE

CANCER TRUST

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO MUSIC

Hi Frank Turner. What's your involvement with Teenage Cancer Trust?

"I'm playing one of the shows this year on March 29. It's obviously a great cause – raising money for teenagers with cancer – and it's horrible when you go to hospitals and you see 16-year-olds suffering from the same disease as people in their eighties... It's a horrible thing to get cancer at any age, but particularly if you're a young kid."

What's it like when you visit a hospital?

"When I went down to the ward that I visited, they said, 'Maybe bring a guitar and play a song or two.' Some of the kids there were fans and that's how it

came about, but the ones who weren't were giving me as good as I got. They were sharp, they were funny, they were a good audience."

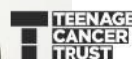
How much of an honour was it collecting this award on behalf of Teenage Cancer Trust?

"I was very flattered to be asked. This is the first time I've ever held an NME Award – I'm not 100 per cent sure if I get to keep it or not. Arguably not, because it's not for me." ■ MB

Frank Turner receives the award on behalf of Teenage Cancer Trust



TEENAGE CANCER TRUST 15TH ANNIVERSARY GIGS



► MARCH 23

Stereophonics

Plus very special guests

► MARCH 24

Kevin Bridges

Plus very special guests

► MARCH 25

Van Morrison

Plus very special guests

► MARCH 26

The Who

Plus very special guest

Wilko Johnson

Gigs take place at London's Royal Albert Hall

► MARCH 27

Paul Weller

Plus very special guest

► MARCH 28

Noel Gallagher's High

Flying Birds

Plus very special guests

Future Islands

► MARCH 29

Frank Turner & The

Sleeping Souls

Plus very special guests

JIMMY PAGE

ROCK'N'ROLL SOUL AWARD

What does winning the Rock'n'Roll Soul Award mean to you?

"Rock'n'roll means everything to me. The minute I heard rock'n'roll as a kid, everything changed. That's how Led Zeppelin came about."

Which bands are carrying on the spirit of rock'n'roll today?

"I've been talking about Royal Blood a lot and I think we all saw tonight why they're so good. When you experience their music live it's like lava coming up out of a volcano. It envelops you."

Are you still working on the Led Zeppelin reissue series?

"We're still releasing them, but I've

finished with them now as far as working on the sonic side of things goes. We were working on all the information that goes with them."

And you're planning on going back on the road – how's that going to work?

"How it's going to work is it's going to be interspersed with the albums coming out. I'm getting back up to speed with the guitar playing in the same way I did before we did the O2 [in December 2007]. There's a lot to play."

Who's going to sing?

"I don't know. I'm not doing politics, I'm just doing music. I might audition myself." ■ KEGP



MORE WINNERS

NME AWARDS 2015
WITH AUSTIN, TEXAS



BEST FESTIVAL GLASTONBURY

Emily Eavis: "We feel incredibly lucky to win. Hopefully Glastonbury offers NME readers the best possible escape from the real world. We've just announced Foo Fighters for 2015, which is amazing; they haven't played since 1998. They're an incredible live force – they feed an enormous sense of event and excitement. The last time I saw them was at Wembley. It was hit after hit. As for everything else, there haven't been any *really* ridiculous rumours this year. We'd love to have Florence + The Machine. Her last gig here [in 2010] was sensational. She's never done a big slot on the Pyramid, so that would be something we'd really hope to happen. I can't say anything other than that!"

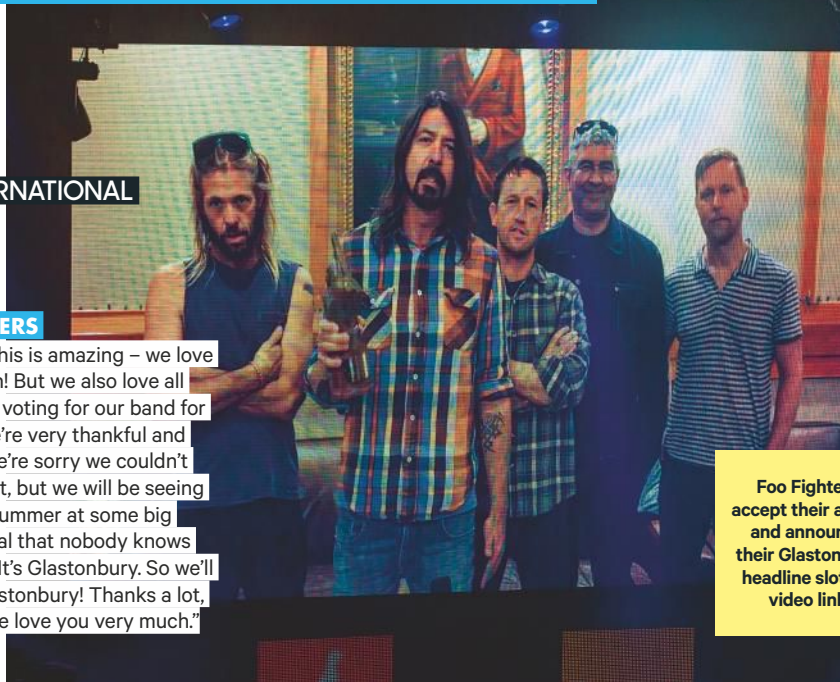
BEST INTERNATIONAL BAND

SUPPORTED BY

Austin
— LIVE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE WORLD —

FOO FIGHTERS

Dave Grohl: "This is amazing – we love you very much! But we also love all of the fans for voting for our band for this award. We're very thankful and very happy. We're sorry we couldn't make it tonight, but we will be seeing you over the summer at some big outdoor festival that nobody knows we're playing. It's Glastonbury! So we'll see you at Glastonbury! Thanks a lot, everybody... we love you very much."



Foo Fighters accept their award and announce their Glastonbury headline slot via video link

BEST SMALL FESTIVAL LIVERPOOL PSYCH FEST

BEST BOOK CLOTHES CLOTHES CLOTHES MUSIC MUSIC MUSIC BOYS BOYS

Viv Albertine: "I'm thrilled! I've never won an award, I've always been an outsider, really. And I wrote the book as an outsider. When The Slits were happening, there's no way we'd have got an award. We were considered completely against the establishment. It's only with the internet and young people rediscovering us that we've got our rightful place now, in the chronology of contemporary music. So it's quite amazing. And very punk, and very inspiring, that you can come back at 60 and still do something good and strong and relevant."

BEST LYRIC HAPPYNES, 'MONTREAL ROCK BAND SOMEWHERE'

The winning line: "I'm wearing Win Butler's hair/There's a scalpsless singer in a Montreal rock band somewhere"

BEST QUOTE SERGE PIZZORNO, KASABIAN

The winning line: "Five records, 10 years. We've earned our shot."

BEST MUSIC FILM PULP: A FILM ABOUT LIFE, DEATH AND SUPERMARKETS

Jarvis Cocker: "[Director] Florian [Habicht] decamped to Sheffield, having never been there, in the middle of winter. I gave him a few addresses of places that are mentioned in songs or stuff like that. And he visited those premises, and managed to meet some quite interesting people who are in the film. And I think that was good for us – that the first we knew of that was when he showed us a rough cut of the film, and we saw these people, these people he'd filmed, these Sheffield characters. And it was great."

BEST FILM NORTHERN SOUL

Elaine Constantine, director: "It's been a real public film. It almost went straight to DVD, but the fans got it in the cinema and it was amazing."

BEST BAND BLOG OR TWITTER LIAM GALLAGHER

BEST REISSUE MANIC STREET PREACHERS, 'THE HOLY BIBLE'

James Dean Bradfield: "I'd have been thrilled to lose to any of the other bands in the category and it's been a pleasure singing Richey's words again. I want to say thank you. I'd like to say thank you to Sony, Johnny Kirkwood and Alison McDonald at Sony and, er, rock a fucking noodle. Thank you very much for this – it's amazing."



BEST FAN COMMUNITY MUSE

WORST BAND 5 SECONDS OF SUMMER

HERO OF THE YEAR ALEX TURNER

VILLAIN OF THE YEAR NIGEL FARAGE



LIVE AT THE AWARDS

THE VACCINES

Dressed in uniform black, The Vaccines strutted through 'Dream Lover', a brand-new song built on a greasy glam guitar riff and singer Justin Young's longing vocals. It augurs well as a sophisticated update of 2011 single 'Post Break-Up Sex'.

How did it go?

Justin Young: "It was fine, everyone's pretty pissed. Here's a secret: we play

that song in a different key to the one we recorded it in. I must have got lucky in the studio! It's about being under the spell of someone else – we've all been in bed with someone we wished was someone different."

How drunk are you?

JY: "Getting there. Freddie [Cowan, guitarist] is the drunkest. He's drinking champagne. It certainly tickles you!" ■ BH

"WE'RE GOING TO BUNDLE JIMMY PAGE IN THE BOOT"

EL-P, RUN THE JEWELS



RUN THE JEWELS

It only took one song – 'Lie, Cheat, Steal' – to witness the wicked camaraderie between El-P and Killer Mike, who stood on the lip of the O2 Academy Brixton stage amping each other up until they blew the roof off.

How was your set?

Killer Mike: "Award shows are all about lying, cheating, stealing, killing and winning. Which at least is better than lying, cheating, stealing, killing and losing. You better hope that if you lose you've got Kanye as your advocate."

Have you met any of your heroes?

El-P: "We're hoping to meet Jimmy Page. We're going to bundle him up, put him in the boot, drive him to a hut in the woods and ask him about 70 questions about how he got the sounds on those Led Zeppelin records. That's the only sane reaction. You don't even want to know about the insane one." ■ KEGP

► Head to NME.COM to watch all the performances from the night, including Royal Blood and Suede



CHARLI

XCX

In the week 'Sucker' finally slapped the UK round the chops, Charli XCX brought the best of British pop to the NME Awards with formidable class, swaggering through the heart-thumping call-to-arms 'Doing It'.

Do you think 'Sucker' will be picking up some awards next year?

"I have absolutely no idea. That would be cool, but I don't do it for awards!"

'Fancy' with Iggy Azalea was the song of the summer. It was everywhere.

"It was cool that it's two girls, as well. And it was such an organic collaboration, so it was really amazing that it took over the world." ■ EM

THE NIGHT

IN PICTURES



HARRY KOISSER, PEACE

"James Dean Bradfield is famous for his phraseology, and told us that shit food makes for great music."



JIMMY PAGE, JAMES DEAN BRADFIELD

James: "I asked him about the guitars he used on the song 'Out On The Tiles', and if it's an octave divider or two pedals. I told you this was music bullshit. Anyway, it was a guitar and bass track."



FELIX WHITE, FLORENCE WELCH

Felix: "Yeah, we're playing Glastonbury. Am I allowed to say that? No. Argh."



TOM MEIGHAN DRAWS NME ASSISTANT EDITOR TOM HOWARD

Tom: "Are you Irish or Scottish? I can tell from your eyebrows."



SERGE PIZZORNO, BEN THATCHER, PETER CROUCH

Serge: "When I was a kid I was in a football team and you'd have an end-of-season do. This is one of them nights. You've done something good, here's an award."



CARL BARÂT, JAMIE T

Carl: "I did the red carpet twice, once with The Libertines and once with The Jackals. It's the most Spinal Tap thing I've ever done."



THE CRIBS

Ryan Jarman: "There's no point lying, I've never heard Royal Blood's music, but it's raunchy so that's fine by me."

EL-P AND KILLER MIKE, RUN THE JEWELS

Killer Mike: "Meet Jimmy Page? We're gonna tackle that motherfucker!"



FAT WHITES' FAMILY

Lias Saudi (left), Mummy Saudi (centre), Nathan Saudi (right)



JARVIS COCKER

"I'm looking forward to the pizza. The NME Awards is the only time I eat in my life."



BEZ

"I can only remember the NME Awards from last year. If I've been to any more I don't know about them."

JUSTIN YOUNG
THE VACCINES

ROYAL
BLOOD
2015
FUCKERS

MIKE & BEN
ROYAL BLOOD

JAMES DEAN
BRADFIELD
MANIC STREET
PREACHERS

THANKS
FOR A GOOD RUN
THE BAD ONES

BRADFIELD
M.S.P.

Phone Home

TOM MEIGHAN
KASABIAN

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The NME guestbook WITH THANKS TO



ANTON NEWCOMBE
THE BRIAN
JONESTOWN
MASSACRE

CHRIS
EDWARDS
KASABIAN

RICKY
WILSON
KAISER CHIEFS

KILLER
MIKE & EL-P
RUN THE
JEWELS

CHRISSIE HYNDE

HARRY KOISSER
PEACE

CANDIDA
DOYLE
PULP

FRANK
TURNER

SUEDE

EMILY EAVIS

DEAN CHALKLEY
NME PHOTOGRAPHER

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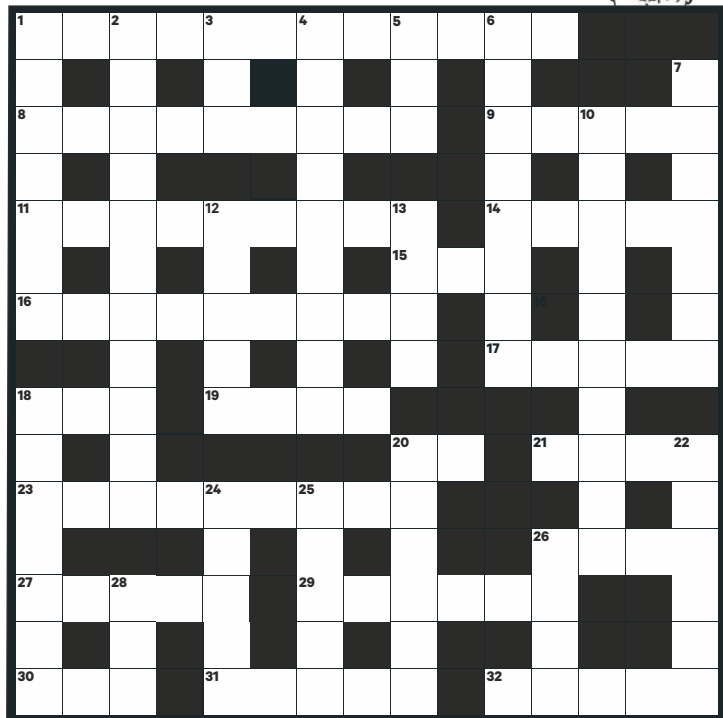
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CROSSWORD

Compiled by TREVOR HUNGERFORD

WIN £50 WORTH OF SEETICKETS VOUCHERS



CLUES ACROSS

1 'Kill The Director' ...would have been murdered by Demis Roussos (5-7)
8 Black Rivers have gone soft there somehow (3-6)
9+27A Tune in here for Hookworms when out east (5-5)
11+26D Catatonia album material went much further than being indecent (3-6-4)
14 "And before the _____ had started we had planned to crash a party", from Jake Bugg's 'Seen It All' (5)
15 Ultravox man getting put in the picture (3)
16 Legendary band who appeared in the '60s cult movie *Blow Up* (9)
17 Mike _____ somehow earns his name from having '60s Number One hit 'Come Outside' (5)
18 She's Australian while being mostly Asian (3)
19 Direction taken by Mark Eitzel on album (4)
20 "Oh man, I need ___ when I got T Rex", from Mott The Hoople's 'All The Young Dudes' (1-1)

21 (See 20 down)
23 "It's a habit of mine to watch the sun go down on _____", 1980 (4-5)
26 2 Tone ska revival band who had hit with 'Mirror In The Bathroom' (4)
27 (See 9 across)
29 Siouxsie And The Banshees' single returns in unclear singing (6)
30 "Moving on the floor now, babe, you're a bird of paradise", opening line to 1982 hit (3)
31 _____ Zeppelin, US band who perform the likes of 'Whole Lotta Love' in reggae style (5)
32 '90s indie band named in the *NME* I'd torn up (5)

CLUES DOWN

1 Express mild disbelief that both Chvrches and Circa Waves are on a break (3-4)
2+7D "Oh can't you see you belong to me", 1983 (5-6-3-4)
3+28D Debbie Harry's debut solo album was twice a knockout that came to nothing (3-3)
4 Former collaborator with

Bombay Bicycle Club, she's now been left 'Unguarded' (3-6)
5+25D Soul II Soul music in need of a more interesting existence (3-1-4)
6 "Hello _____ my old friend, I've come to talk with you again", from Simon & Garfunkel's 'The Sound Of Silence' (8)
7 (See 2 down)
10 Pixies had to delve right down to come up with burning passion (3-3-4)
12 Mercury Prize winners in 2008 (5)
13 Australia's Little May have some very fine material just lying around (4)
18 Fred Macpherson's band now dealing with 'All The Sad Young Men' (7)
20+21A With gender correctly identified, it's Fuck Buttons (3-3-4)
22 They came out of Brighton with a 'Thunder, Lightning, Strike!' (2-4)
24 Pulled Apart By Horses album that pulsates within (5)
25 (See 5 down)
26 (See 11 across)
28 (See 3 down)

FEBRUARY 14 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1 Falling Awake, 8 Let It Go, 9 Lithium, 11 Eden Kane, 13 Monster, 15 We Care, 17+12A Damon Albarn, 18 Go Now, 19 Otis, 21 Ooh La La, 24 Then, 25 Dreams, 30 Astor, 31 Outland, 32+15D Keys To The World
DOWN 1+29D False Hope, 2 Let Me Down Gently, 3 It Takes Two, 4 Grounded, 5 Wild, 6 Kathleen, 7+28A Gina Birch, 14 Rail, 16+28D Art Brut, 18 Get Back, 20 I Am, 22+33A Here It Comes, 23+10D Arctic Monkeys, 26 Alarm, 27 Sides

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ONLINE

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As 'If You're Reading This It's Too Late' drops, the

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THE NME COVER THAT I GONE AND DONE

by CHRIS SIMPSON'S ARTIST

nme
28 February 2015

12 angry priests attack nme award guests with melted buckets of plastic and brass crosses

the main priest is still on the loose

noel gallagher beheads the archbishop of canterbury with a homemade axe made out of a table leg in a act of revenge

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and

exclusive interview with the only known man on earth who collects elton johns bone marrow

and

what would your house look like if it had never been built

the nme awards trophy has been changed to a plain hand after protests by priests

45

SAM JONES

Reviews

► THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY BEN HOMEWOOD



Will Butler Policy

Arcade Fire's wild man and multi-instrumentalist mixes garage, funk and new wave on his doom-laden solo debut



bawling “WOOOAH-OOAH”’s like the world’s most passionate Coldplay fan and hammering away at hand-held bass drums (when he’s not lobbing it high into the lighting rig). So his debut solo album, you might assume, would be a mess of deranged terrace chants, horny-gorilla drums and the sound of the mixing desk being prised out of the studio ceiling.

Think again. The 32-year-old’s solo bow is a record crouched, itching behind the jukebox of popular

► In the Arcade Fire family, Will Butler – the multi-instrumentalist kid brother of frontman Win – comes across as the precocious ADHD toddler of the brood. He’s the hyperactive wildman throwing himself around the stage, convulsing like Iggy Pop on a winegums-and-coke bender,

culture, flapping away personal demons and jabbering about The Singularity – the age when artificial intelligence will overtake human brain capacity – and WikiLeaks. Over 27-plus minutes, as if he was desperate to get out of the studio before ‘they’ cut the power, Butler uses a broad variety of styles – classic garage rock’n’roll, new wave, lounge balladry, electric ’70s funk, synthpop – to deliver eight edge-of-darkness dittats in that confrontational Arcade Fire snarl, but with barely any musical similarity to the band that made him famous. Take opener ‘Take My Side’, which has Butler demanding that an old friend come round to his way of thinking in the style of rockabilly night at the Ultimatum Arms. “Swore we’re friends forever/So before you run and hide, tell me/Are you gonna take my side?” he rails.

‘Anna’ holds a similarly glinting edge to the throat of Talking Heads-style electropop, Butler hiccupping

ILLUSTRATION: JIMMY TURRELL

manic falsettos as he urges his bakery worker heroine to "Take out the knife/Sharpen it twice/And get all the money" as sinister slashes of saxophone and piano gather like shadowy accomplices. 'Witness' is a celebratory prom rocker about being too scared to testify in court and 'Something's Coming' ups the doom-

'POLICY' MAKERS

Three uncompromising artists who influenced Will's album

Violent Femmes

Will Butler: "I really love the lesser-known Violent Femmes albums. Their [self-titled] first album is a classic, but the rest have a certain quality to them. I was listening to them during the process – some of it, the production hasn't aged well, but the songs are super-good underneath. They're really unhinged."

Wu-Tang Clan

"I love that Wu-Tang Clan are so violent and absurd and surprising and beautiful. Kanye West does the same thing where he does something beautiful and horrible all at the same time. That mix of violence and humour appeals to me."

John Lennon

"Lennon's solo albums, particularly the first couple, are so raw and in the room. They're very simple and consciously very pure. Even the production style is simple. He was writing them as an immigrant in New York and it feels like an expression of a very American experience."

too. 'Finish What I Started' and 'Sing To Me' promise an acclaimed sideline as a piano balladeer in the future. But for now, just because he's paranoid doesn't mean we're not watching him. ■ MARK BEAUMONT

► THE DETAILS

► RELEASE DATE March 10 ► LABEL Merge ► PRODUCER Will Butler
► LENGTH 27:22 ► TRACKLISTING ►1. Take My Side ►2. Anna
►3. Finish What I Started ►4. Son Of God ►5. Something's
Coming ►6. What I Want ►7. Sing To Me ►8. Witness
► BEST TRACK What I Want

mongering to apocalyptic levels. "Look out, look out, look out!" Will hisses to a backing of cartoonish funk and scabrous guitar delirium that resembles a very evil 'Reflektor'. "When I woke up in the morning with your hands all dripping blood/ My friend sweetly said 'Something's coming', oh is it the end?/I don't know, but it sure as hell ain't the beginning..." "Here Come The End Times", anyone?

There's a real sense of a psyche unravelling. On the punk-pop 'What I Want', Butler sings of eating a "pony macaroni", walking across the sea to Greenland, his obsession with a particular shade of blue and getting pet alligators to help solidify a burgeoning relationship. 'Take My Side' includes the bizarre aside "If I could fly, I'd kick the shit out of some birds". On the quivering flamenco pop 'Son Of God' he even begs for salvation from himself: "If the son of God would come down", he trembles, "Then I'd be good, I swear I'd be good".

'Policy' is a gloriously unhinged sprawl of a record, but fittingly for the man who constructed sparse piano tech-paeans for the soundtrack to Spike Jonze's 2013 movie *Her*, the downbeat moments resonate,

7

MORE ALBUMS

DJ Yoda

Breakfast Of Champions

Kartel/Believe Digital



Forward-thinking but still like an old-fashioned hip-hop

album, 'Breakfast Of Champions' retains the magpie ear for unusual and musically rich samples that characterises DJ Yoda's 'How To Cut And Paste' mixtapes. Duncan Beiny's third album under this alias unites him with a Wu-Tang Clan's worth of little-known British MCs. 'Day To Night' mixes Rex Domino and Sparkz's UK hip-hop slang with languid jazz, 'Pebble Beach' conjures up Caribbean beaches and Looney Tune cartoons, and 'The Baddest' fashions a grimy beat out of blues harmonica and wobbly brass. The latter ends with a sample of LL Cool J saying he's "just provin' I'm bad". This excellent record does the same for DJ Yoda. ■ ANGUS BATEY

8

Young Guv

Ripe 4 Luv Slumberland



Toronto punk musician Ben Cook's back catalogue is sprawling,

but his debut album as Young Guv might just be his most impressive work yet. If you know him as one Fucked Up's guitarists – and prior to that, lead hollerer in noisy Canadian hardcore crew No Warning or one half of post-punk duo The Bitters – prepare to marvel as Cook blossoms into a pop auteur on 'Ripe 4 Luv'. This remarkable eight-song record keeps a foot firmly in the indie-pop camp, but reaches deep into the 1980s for production tricks, Prince's slink and skeletal R&B drums powering 'Wrong Crowd'. The album's diamond, 'Kelly, I'm Not A Creep', is perfect 1985-vintage teen-movie power pop, and highlights this versatile talent.

■ NOEL GARDENER

8



Founding member Andy Gill disguises uneven solo work as the Leeds legends' ninth album

When legendary Leeds post-punks Gang Of Four reformed in 2004 for 'Return The Gift', they did so with the four-piece original line-up intact. Then their rhythm section left, meaning 2010's fan-funded 'Content' was a Gang Of Two record. Now, singer Jon King has walked, leaving only founding guitarist Andy Gill for 'What Happens Next' – a solo record being hawked as the band's ninth album. There's a new singer, John Gaoler, but 59-year-old Gill can't think much of him judging by the number of guest vocalists here. The Kills' Alison Mosshart sings on 'Broken Talk', a taut rock song, and 'England's In My Bones', a state-of-the-nation track reminiscent of PJ Harvey but lacking punch. Robbie Furze of The Big Pink guests on 'Graven Image' and German actor/singer Herbert Grönemeyer croons across dystopian pop ballad 'Dying Rays'. Alienation, identity and globalisation become unifying themes, but 'What Happens Next' is a distracted listen – an experimental Gill production that should be out under his name only.

■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

6



► THE DETAILS

► RELEASE DATE March 2 ► LABEL Membran ► PRODUCER Andy Gill
► LENGTH 51:20 ► TRACKLISTING ►1. Where The Nightingale Sings ►2. Broken Talk ►3. Isle Of Dogs ►4. England's In My Bones ►5. Dying Rays ►6. Obey The Ghost ►7. First World Citizen ►8. Stranded ►9. Graven Image ►10. Dead Souls ►11. Staubkorn
► BEST TRACK Dying Rays

Evans The Death Expect Delays

Fortuna Pop!



ETD explored indie-pop on their self-titled 2012 debut, but 'Expect Delays' finds them aspiring to the profile of gothic psych bands like The Horrors. The London quartet swathe the honeycomb melodies of this second album in deformed guitar squall, baggy bass, demonic

noise and off-key organ of the kind Faris Badwan's band favoured in their early days. Indie-pop's kitchen-sink melancholy is firmly in place, though: "Do you love me enough to be my enabler?" Katherine Whitaker howls over the violent MBV churn of 'Enabler', while 'Idiot Button' is all dole-queue ennui. It's all a beautiful exorcism of weird pop noise. Their new look suits them.

■ MARK BEAUMONT

8

Reviews

Public Service Broadcasting The Race For Space

Test Card Recordings



You could characterise what PSB do – namely, sampling

old propaganda films and splicing in their own krautrocky electronica – as mere shtick, but it's far more valuable than that. If 2013's 'Inform Educate Entertain' cast the London duo as archivists of a forgotten Britain, here they've cast their net wider, tapping into that era of human history when anything seemed possible; when – to paraphrase JFK, whose voice opens proceedings here – we could “choose to go to the moon” and succeed. The rest of the record is imbued with that same spirit. The promise of the space age was never fully delivered, but for PSB the horizon looks boundless.

8

Diet Cig

Over Easy Father/Daughter



The five scrappy anthems on New York two-piece

Diet Cig's debut EP whizz by in little over 10 minutes. Initially, Alex Luciano and Noah Bowman's lo-fi sound can seem thin to the point of translucence, most notably on 'Pool Boyz', which features Luciano's jarringly weak lyric, “I just wanna get cool, let's go swimming in a swimming pool”. ‘Over Easy’ gets better, though. ‘Cardboard’ is a sardonic love letter to a try-hard boyfriend set to driving power chords, ‘Scene Sick’ is subtle and tender, and the fizzing ‘Harvard’ boasts a bratty refrain of “Fuck your Ivy League sweater”. Coming on like an amped-up Waxahatchee, the latter provides the record with its most memorable and triumphant moment.

7

DAVID RENSHAW

Surprise mixtape from the Toronto rap superstar is wracked with edgy melancholy

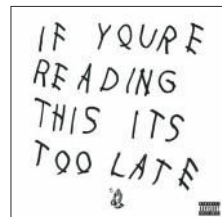
Drake

If You're Reading This It's Too Late

Is Drake flipping off the man with his new mixtape? Surprise-released on iTunes (and briefly hosted for free on SoundCloud before promptly vanishing), the 28-year-old Toronto rapper's latest is rumoured to be a ruse – a ploy to run down his contract with label Cash Money before the release of his new album proper, ‘Views From The 6’, later this year.

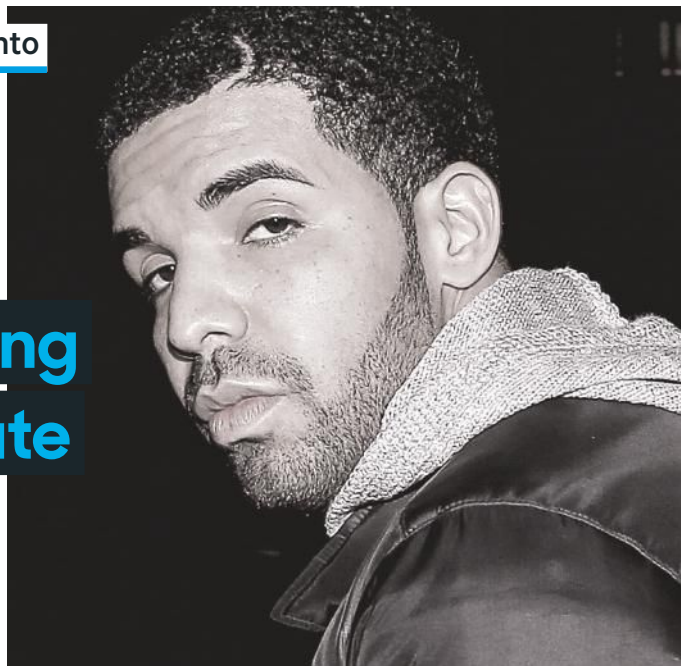
And yet, (deliberate?) lack of singles aside, it's hard to see Cash Money crying into their fat stacks over ‘If You're Reading This It's Too Late’. In America, it racked up half a million sales in under a week, which is pretty lucrative

as thinly veiled ‘fuck you’s’ go. Fans are unlikely to feel short-changed either, since it represents a gorgeously moody if rather low-key offering with a clutch of classy production turns from long-term collaborator Noah ‘40’ Shebib: see the paranoid synth pulse of ‘No



THE DETAILS

► **RELEASE DATE** February 13 ► **LABEL** OVO Sound / Young Money / Cash Money / Republic ► **PRODUCERS** Aubrey ‘Drake’ Graham, Noah ‘40’ Shebib, PartyNextDoor, Boi-1da, OB O'Brien, Sevn Thomas, Vinylz, Syk Sense, Frank Dukes, Most High, Amir Obe, Wondagurl, Daxx, Eric Dingus, Jimmy Prime, Travis Scott, TM88, Illmind
► **LENGTH** 68:40 ► **TRACKLISTING** ► 1. Legend ► 2. Energy ► 3. 10 Bands ► 4. Know Yourself ► 5. No Tellin' ► 6. Madonna ► 7. 6 God ► 8. Star67 ► 9. Preach ► 10. Wednesday Night Interlude ► 11. Used To ► 12. 6 Man ► 13. Now & Forever ► 14. Company ► 15. You & The 6 ► 16. Jungle ► 17. 6PM In New York ► **BEST TRACK** Know Yourself



Tellin’, or the way ‘Madonna’ uses a cut-up piano line to suggest a sense of ghostly disconnect (“Pilled up, filled up, damn girl/I’ll be getting back to you for sure”). ‘Know Yourself’ crackles with strung-out intent, morphing at the midway point to reveal the record’s strongest vocal hook, and ‘Star67’ is similarly thick with compelling melancholy.

But for all the music’s cagey intelligence, Drake sounds like the kind of guy who comes sauntering out the traps in a 100m race and immediately breaks out into a victory lap, pausing only to remonstrate with hecklers. “All I know, if I die, I’m a motherfucking legend”, he croon-raps on opener ‘Legend’, which mightn’t necessarily be a problem, but consider: while Kanye West raps of being a god, Drake brags peevishly about having two mortgages worth a combined \$30 million (‘Energy’). Also irksome are his stream of ‘web 2.0’ name-drops (“Man I’m talking way before hashtags”) and endless, inane attempts at generating memes (like referring to his hometown as “the 6”).

For all that, it’s striking that Drizzy is such a blockbuster draw even when he’s in form as edgy and uncommercial as this. Such are the perks of being a #legend, we suppose.

ALEX DENNEY

6

Various Artists

Vol 3 Beech Coma



Based in both London and Leeds, fledgling label Beech

Coma specialises in Bandcamp compilations, collating the most exciting new music that has appeared on the online streaming site. Their well-received first two compilations showcased the likes of King TV’s sugary lo-fi and Abattoir Blues’ bullish post-punk. The

quality of ‘Vol 3’ is just as consistent. Los Angeles trio Jr. contribute ‘The Caller’ – sunkissed indie-pop in the vein of a chilled-out Vampire Weekend – while Auckland producer Amelia Murray (aka Fazerdaze) provides elegant dreampop on ‘Zero’. The best bits come in the form of Leeds band Bruising – ‘Can’t You Feel’ is a fuzzy thrill – and the ambling lo-fi charm that Lou E (King TV’s Louis Milburn) exhibits on ‘Just One Thing’.

RHIAN DALY

8

Sunset Sons

The Fall Line EP Polydor



Sunset Sons are four Anglo-Australian dudes who

formed as a covers band in French surfing town Hossegor before honing their own material at pub gigs in Alpine ski resorts. Bypassing the funk-rock direction of their previous EPs, this four-track third effort opens with the early Kings Of Leon stomp of ‘Medicine’, Bournemouth-

born singer Rory Williams belting out its “all I know” hook with convincing yearning. Second track ‘Blondie’ is its equal, but interest wanes when Sunset Sons wallow in sensitivity on ballads ‘Movie Scene’ and ‘Lies’. Both demonstrate the quartet’s ambition to play much bigger stages, but one-dimensional choruses mean they end up sounding insipid. Nonetheless, the first half marks a step in a more exciting direction.

STUART HUGGETT

5

Reviews

Torche

Relapse



When they're not fending off bats – one urinated into guitarist

Andrew Elstner's eyeball a few years back after he startled it – Florida sludge-rockers Torche are crafting beautifully brutal music. Mixed by Kurt Ballou of Massachusetts hardcore act Converge, this fourth album

is unsurprisingly heavy. Yet from its swirling density comes a majestic hard-rock album. The meditative but pulverising 'Minions' is powered by a thumping beat, while 'Undone' features monastic vocal harmonies. In contrast to the short, sharp songs that precede it, the title-track closer packs eight beastly minutes with hypnotic power. It's a clever finale to an overwhelmingly tough album, emotionally and physically.

LEONIE COOPER

8

Fawn Spots

Critical Heights



'From Safer Place' is the debut album from York punks Fawn

Spots. Don't let their whimsical name or the album's title fool you; this record is far from calm. With a flurry of furious guitar, 'New Sense' comes on like an irate Iceage, and the propulsive instrumental opening section of 'Basque Knife' is pushed to even

harsher extremes when Jonathan Meager and Oliver Grabowski start growling over the top of its Hüsker Dü-inspired noise. Their lyrics are frustratingly indecipherable on the intriguingly titled 'I'm Not A Man; I Never Will Be', but its clattering riffs and bellowed vocals make Fawn Spots' frustration plain enough. That energy runs throughout 'From Safer Place', making for an uncompromising introduction to their world.

RHIAN DALY

7

Matthew E White

Fresh Blood Domino



Virginia-born, Manila-raised songwriter

Matthew E White's 2012 debut 'Big Inner' was an album of soul-pop excellence. He repeats the trick with 'Fresh Blood', a record so wonderfully timeless it sounds like he gathered Bill Withers and Neil Young together in a sunny conservatory for a Sunday-morning jam. Not only are songs like 'Take Care My Baby' and 'Rock & Roll Is Cold' beautifully crafted, they're produced with a warm, caring hand. The bearded White oozes authenticity and cool, in the old-fashioned way. It's almost all smiles, but 'Tranquility' – written about the death of Phillip Seymour Hoffman and placed three tracks before the end – adds a touching tribute to a richly immersive album.

GREG COCHRANE

8

Swervedriver

I Wasn't Born To Lose You Cherry Red



One of shoegaze's leading lights in the early '90s, the

Oxford quartet's USP, amid the obligatory feedback-drenched guitars and mumbled lyrics, was an obsession with American imagery. Now that Slowdive and Ride have returned, who could begrudge Swervedriver – who reformed in 2008 – their first album for 17 years? Reflecting the country-rock dalliances of frontman Adam Franklin's other band, Bolts Of Melody, 'I Wasn't Born To Lose You' is more sedate than the overdriven Dinosaur Jr cribbing of old. However, even on cosier turns like 'Everso', a taste for gratuitous layers of six-string remains. It's telling that the finest moment – the blurry psychedelic slush of 'Red Queen Arms Race' – is also the heaviest.

NOEL GARDNER

6

Fuelled by tragedy, the hardcore Canadians' fifth emerges as their strongest record yet

Cancer Bats

Searching For Zero



NME
ALBUM
OF THE WEEK

Three seconds into 'True Zero', the second track on Cancer Bats' fifth album, frontman Liam Cormier screams, "May I remind myself who I really am". That sense of rediscovery runs throughout 'Searching For Zero'. Exhausted by heavy touring in 2013, the Toronto ragers used 2014 to recuperate. But tragedy wrecked their recovery: the deaths of several close friends left the quartet battered, bruised and uncertain. The resulting record is the sound of a band wrestling to re-engage with the reasons they started in the first place.

It doesn't take them long. Opener 'Satellites' is a fast, frayed collision of metal and hardcore, with piercing guitar from Scott Middleton and hollered group vocals. It's an example of the unifying heaviness they've been honing since their 2006 debut 'Birthing The Giant'. On the bone-rattling 'True Zero', Cormier's catharsis

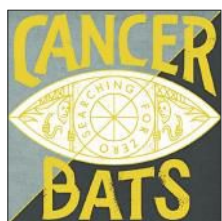
is palpable. He's not just screaming, he's forcefully ripping his lyrics from the back of his throat, quashing his sadness: "Negative falls away/This is where I'll stay".

Encouraged by producer Ross Robinson (Slipknot, Korn) to channel their emotion into the most forceful noise they could muster, Cancer Bats push themselves to punishing extremes. The brutal sentiment of the bracing 'Arsenic In The Year Of The Snake' ("Too many friends died this year") is set to drumbeats that land like machine-gun bullets, and 'All Hail' (a tribute to Dave Brockie of horror-metal band Gwar, who died in March 2014) is a frightening 90-second bombardment. 'Devil's Blood' is the best tune here – a breakneck rhythm from bassist Jaye Schwarzer and drummer Mike Peters is matched by Middleton's searing riff and Cormier's deranged screams of "World on fire!". Without warning, the song falls into a deep, Melvins-like sludge before suddenly reverting to its rapid chorus. Even after repeat listens, the surprise is nauseating.

Elsewhere, Cancer Bats indulge their Black Sabbath obsession on 'Beelzebub' and 'Buds'. Both tracks add depth and tone to what emerges as their most complete, most important album yet. Ferocious, thrilling and unrelentingly heavy, it's an emphatic reminder of who Cancer Bats really are.

BEN HOMEWOOD

8



THE DETAILS

►RELEASE DATE March 9 ►LABEL Noise Church ►PRODUCER Ross Robinson
►LENGTH 33:04 ►TRACKLISTING ►1. Satellites ►2. True Zero ►3. Arsenic In The Year Of The Snake ►4. Beelzebub ►5. Devil's Blood ►6. Cursed With A Conscience ►7. All Hail ►8. Buds ►9. Dusty ►10. No More Bullshit
►BEST TRACK Devil's Blood



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FILM

Catch Me Daddy

Gritty drama set in Yorkshire is built on tension and bleak, unremitting violence

Catch Me Daddy opens with a middle-aged man snorting cocaine in a grotty caravan. It's the first of a great many bleak moments in this low-budget thriller, conceived as a "modern-day Western set in the Yorkshire moors" by first-time director Daniel Wolfe, who co-wrote the script with his brother Matthew. Together, they offer a hellish vision of what can happen when a young girl's lifestyle conflicts with the strict values of her Pakistani family.

Teenager Laila (Sameena Jabeen Ahmed, whose performance earned her a Best Actress nomination at 2014's British Independent Film Awards) and her boyfriend Aaron (Connor McCarron, star of 2010's *Neds*) are on the run from Laila's traditional Pakistani family. They live in a caravan in a gloomy Yorkshire town, grimly rendered by *Fish Tank* cinematographer Robbie Ryan. Laila works as a hairdresser, Aaron spends his days playing fruit machines in a run-down social club. When Aaron turns his nose up at a job as a dishwasher, Laila's response suggests she resents his laziness: "Do you think I like washing old women's hair?"

Yet the more we see of the couple's life the happier it seems. In a memorable early scene they spend an evening together in their caravan, Aaron contentedly getting high on codeine pills on the sofa while Laila dances gleefully to Patti Smith's 'Land'. It's one of three Smith songs in the soundtrack, which also features Tim Buckley and

unsettling ambient music from Matthew Wolfe and drone artist Daniel Thomas Freeman. Until now, Daniel Wolfe has directed music videos – he made the gritty visual accompaniment to Plan B's 2010 single 'Prayin' and French electronic duo The Shoes' Jake Gyllenhaal-starring 'Time To Dance' – and he cleverly mixes Smith's visceral punk with an intimate snapshot of two people perfectly comfortable in each other's company.

The jubilation is cut short when Laila's family begins to intervene in her life. Her father is unhappy with her relationship, so sends two car loads of men to the caravan to confront the couple. A gruesome game of cat and mouse ensues. The grimness Wolfe has explored so far turns to gore, and there are a series of brutal scenes depicting horrible violence. In one, someone is beaten, tossed from a moving car and then run over. Wolfe uses these moments to explore the effects that fear can have on the human mind. In one scene, the couple get into a taxi to continue their escape but, terrified,

Aaron picks an argument with the driver and screams to be let out. They become isolated, unable to trust anyone.

Wolfe manages to maintain the overwhelming tension until the frustratingly ambiguous conclusion. *Catch Me Daddy* is uncompromising, miserable and powerful enough to linger long in the mind. ■ NICK LEVINE



►DIRECTOR
Daniel Wolfe
►IN CINEMAS
February 26

CINEMA

White God



White God, which won the category recognising "original and different" films at

2014's Cannes Film Festival, is Hungarian director Kornél Mundruczó's bizarre vision of a canine apocalypse. When her mother goes away on business, Lili and her dog Hagen must stay with her miserable father. Lili's dad dislikes Hagen intensely, and abandons the Labrador crossbreed. Hagen is picked up in the street by an unsavoury character who colours his teeth with black ink and trains him as a fighting dog. As Lili tries to find her lost pet, Hagen and a large group of fellow crossbreeds revolt en masse against humans. The scenes shot from Hagen's perspective are arresting, creating suffocating tension in what is an unsettling, unconventional horror with shades of Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*. 8

■ DAN BRIGHTMORE

CINEMA

Backstreet Boys: Show 'Em What You're Made Of



Stephen Kijak, the man behind this Backstreet Boys doc, also directed 2010

Rolling Stones film *Stones In Exile*. Kijak's cameras started rolling in 2012, after original member Kevin Richardson rejoined the band, and his film tells a familiar story of tension in a manufactured pop group. There's crime (manager Lou Pearlman was jailed in 2008 for money laundering) and substance abuse (AJ McLean entered rehab at the band's peak), but Kijak's film goes beyond cliché. The differing personalities in the band, completed by Brian Littrell, Nick Carter and Howie Dorough, are surprisingly engrossing. Kijak skilfully makes their interactions – particularly when the rest of the group confront Littrell about the deterioration of his voice – feel poignant. 7

■ NICK LEVINE

CINEMA

It Follows



It Follows is a low-budget horror film about what is surely the world's worst

STD. After suburban teenager Jay (*The Guest*'s Maika Monroe) consummates her relationship with Hugh (Jake Weary from TV's *Pretty Little Liars*), he informs her he has passed "it" on. Soon, Jay is plagued by visions of a strange figure walking towards her that

only she can see: wherever she runs, "it" follows, and the only way to rid herself of the vision is to give it to someone else through a sexual encounter. Writer-director David Robert Mitchell (*The Myth Of The American Sleepover*) isn't the first to combine frights with burgeoning teen sexuality, but because his smart script cranks up the tension and without gratuitous gore, this film feels fresh and scary. ■ NICK LEVINE

8

CINEMA

Hinterland



This directorial debut from young British actor-director Harry McQueen tells an intimate story of two 20-something friends. Harvey (McQueen) and Lola (Bristol singer-songwriter Lori Campbell in her first acting role) haven't seen each other for years. When Lola returns home after her parents separate, Harvey drives her to the seaside

cottage their families used to holiday in. Set up as a story of escape and emancipation, their reunion is meant to be touching and exciting. But when Lola turns to Harvey in his parents' old car and says, "I'm so glad to see you", the moment feels wooden, passionless and forced. Things threaten to heat up when marriage is discussed but, ultimately, *Hinterland* can't replicate the raw human emotion it seeks to. ■ RHIAN DALY

5

The Cribbs

Electric Ballroom,

London

Thursday, February 12





Gary (left) and
Ryan Jarman at
the Electric
Ballroom,
Camden,
London

Ryan, Gary and Ross preview
their sixth album with seven
ear-shredding new songs

PHOTO BY JORDAN HUGHES

Ryan Jarman is being unusually assertive. Airing much of The Cribs' new sixth album 'For All My Sisters' at this special warm-up show, he wants the crowd to show the new material as much love as their more familiar hits. "I hate it when people hear new songs and because they don't know them they don't have a moshpit," he tells the crowd. "Fuck that, man, you guys are going to have a moshpit, and we'll make it dead easy." He plays a riff, tells people to remember it, and kicks into 'Different Angle', a new tune that pits thudding drums against a nagging guitar line and brother Gary's falsetto vocals. Sure enough, a moshpit ensues. ➡

Ross, Gary
and (below)
Ryan



THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD



Justin Young, 27,
New York

"I feel like The Cribs are such strong melodicists – they're one of the few bands I enjoy coming to see even if I don't know the material. There was a bit of Weezer in the sound, but it was quite loud and raucous too."



Maddy, 24, London

"The new songs were amazing. Before now I've only heard the two singles, but I've always loved this band and it sounds like they've gone back to their first album, which was when I first got into them – kind of poppy but sloppy round the edges."



Joe, 22, Barnsley

"They went to my college in Barnsley, but they never finished the course. I've seen them a few times and the last time was the week before they released their last album – I seem to drop in when they're playing new material. They never disappoint; they've mastered pacing their setlist."



Emily, 20, Oxford

"It was awesome; I liked that they played quite a few of their new songs. I love the new single 'Burning For No-One' and the B-side of that song is really good too."

There's a bit of a Weezer feel to them, a bit 'Pinkerton'. This is the 12th time I've seen them!"

IT ALL SEEMS TO GO OUT OF TIME, ONLY TO BE SNAPPED BACK WITH A CRASH OF ROSS' CYMBAL

Really, the crowd at this low-key comeback gig need little encouragement. Anyone who loves The Cribs – and those present feverishly do – can find much to get excited about in 'For All My Sisters'. The tracks debuted tonight are as instant, catchy and explosive as anything the Wakefield trio have ever written, albeit "poppy" – as was promised – in the sense that the band have always made pop music for people who like fanzines and jumpers with holes in them.

Plenty has changed since The Cribs last toured. Aside from a handful of festivals and one-offs, their last run of gigs was in 2013, when they were marking the release of 'Payola', the compilation that rounded up the best of the band's first decade. Since then, there have been low-key side-projects (Ryan's Exclamation Pony) and a shift from indie label Wichita to major Sony Red. Their recording career for the new label began with them enlisting their dream producers – 'For All My Sisters' was made with Ric Ocasek of The Cars and the noisier follow-up will be engineered by Steve Albini. It begs the question of what the effect has been on the band's live show. The answer: almost none. The room is dark and sweaty, the brothers amble onstage in T-shirts and spray-on jeans and the show begins with squealing feedback and flashing lights. No new bells and whistles, no tricks, just tune after tune, same as it ever was.

Seven new tracks get an airing: the Cars-like 'An Ivory Hand' comes after opener 'Mirror Kissers', its squealing riff peeling from Ryan's

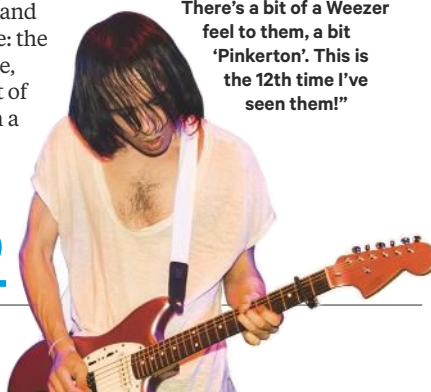
guitar at ear-shredding volume. Afterwards, indulging some unlikely posturing, Ryan bellows, "Are you ready to rock? I said, ARE YOU READY TO ROCK?!" before a trio of familiar favourites: 'Come On, Be A No-One' from 2011's 'In The Belly Of The Brazen Bull', 2004 single 'You Were Always The One' and 'Another Number' from their self-titled debut. Another unheard tune, 'Finally Free', shows that the gap between the early material and the brand new is one of incremental change, not revolution, simply a band getting better and better at what they've always done well.

'Summer Of Chances' comes hot on the heels of propulsive recent single 'Burning For No One'. Ryan says he's struggling to remember how to play, and accordingly stares down at his guitar while Gary sings. Then there's the seven-minute 'Pink Snow', introduced by Ryan as "my favourite Cribs song". It starts slowly, Ryan hunched over, white T-shirt hanging from bony shoulders by the widest scoop-neck imaginable, before exploding into life. The set concludes with an unbeatable run of classics: 'I'm A Realist', 'Hey Scenesters!', 'Men's Needs' and 'City Of Bugs', which brings things to a chaotic close after its brooding, gothic intro. There's no encore – there never is under Cribs rules – and if tonight has been about proving anything, it's that while some things may have changed, the essence of the band lies in the things that stay the same: the melodies, the raucous performance, the bits where it all seems to go out of time, only to be snapped back with a crash of Ross' cymbal. And, of course, it's in the sweaty fans who pile out after 19 ragged songs, seven new earworms burrowing into their heads. ■ DAN STUBBS

8

SETLIST

- Mirror Kissers
- An Ivory Hand
- Come On, Be A No-One
- Different Angle
- You Were Always The One
- Another Number
- Finally Free
- Our Bovine Public
- Martell
- Burning For No One
- Summer Of Chances
- Cheat On Me
- Pink Snow
- I'm A Realist
- Mr Wrong
- Glitters Like Gold
- Hey Scenesters!
- Men's Needs
- City Of Bugs



Honeyblood

Oslo, London

Wednesday, February 11

The Glasgow duo's emotional fury leaves a devoted crowd breathless



Revenge is sweet. When Stina Tweeddale launches into the chorus of 'Super Rat' and finds 400 adoring devotees in a sold-out Oslo yowling, "I will hate you forever! Scumbag sleaze, slimeball grease/You really do disgust me!" back at her in solidarity, the vindicated grin on her face seems to say, "You hearing this, fucker?"

Honeyblood's army of romantic retribution – the boys bewitched and the girls in their best bollock-kicking boots – has grown hand-in-hand with their standing since the release of last year's excellent self-titled debut. The squealing metal of 'Biro', 'Choker', 'Killer Bangs' and the twisted fairground twirl of 'Bud' have cast them as Glasgow's answer to The Breeders. Mind you, boasting the insouciant fury of a mogwai Courtney Love, the demonic mentality of Steve Albini and the pop allure of Kim Deal, Stina's pretty much a scene in her own right.

She has also become a consummate show-woman, posing and preening through the aggro-Franz 'All Dragged Up', leading the boisterous crowd in a chorus of impish coos during a solo encore of early B-side 'Kissing On You', and greeting her drummer bandmate Cat Myers back onstage by asking, "How was your pee?" There's also a valorous vulnerability to 'Braid Burn Valley (Blink, Now You've Missed It)', Stina spitting, "Another fucking bruise/But this one looks just like a rose" like the most defiant abuse victim ever. The lacerating riffing of 'Killer Bangs' matches it for aggression, beginning a three-song climax that thwacks the breath from all in the room. ■ MARK BEAUMONT

SETLIST

- Fall Forever
- Biro
- (I'd Rather Be) Anywhere But Here
- Bud
- Fortune Cookie
- Joey
- Choker
- No Spare Key
- All Dragged Up
- Super Rat
- Braid Burn Valley (Blink, Now You've Missed It)
- Killer Bangs
- Kissing On You
- The Black Cloud



WUNMI ONIBUDO, DEREK BREMMER

MORE GIGS

Django Django The Warehouse, Leeds

Saturday, February 14
Walking out in front of cardboard letters spelling D-J-A-N-G-O, Django Django are dressed in vintage football shirts. The eccentric keys of 2012 single 'Hail Bop' launch the east London-based quartet's first show in 18 months spectacularly. Comeback single 'First Light' follows and sounds darker than anything from 2012's self-titled debut. Tonight's other new track, 'Reflections', is decked in house pianos and euphoric breaks – an art-school indie attempt at a club classic and a suggestion that DD may be after Hot Chip's dorky disco crown. The crowd freaks out over the scattergun percussion of 'WOR' and 'Silver Rays', but it's the new tunes that linger.

■ ROBERT COOKE

9

Gaz Coombes Gorilla, Manchester

Wednesday, February 11
Only 17 when he formed Supergrass, Gaz Coombes was once Britpop's insouciant ambassador of youth. At 38, he's growing into his best work. Reflective on record, songs from second solo album 'Matador' sound tough and potent live. Opener 'Buffalo' marries skittering electronics to a vocal wracked with anguish, 'The Girl Who Fell To Earth' – an ode to his autistic daughter – is greeted with hushed reverence, and the motorik pulse of 'The English Ruse' roars. There are no Supergrass tunes, but closer 'Break The Silence' (from 2012 solo debut 'Here Come The Bombs') erupts like a lost indie-disco classic, showing that faith in his creative vision has paid off.

■ GARY RYAN

8



NME
GIG
OF THE WEEK



Drenge

The Dome, London
Thursday, February 12

With a new bassist, the Loveless brothers thrash through fearsome new material

What with Royal Blood making a forceful attempt at becoming the biggest rock band in the UK, the return of Death From Above 1979 from the wilderness and the arrival of Slaves' aggressive oi! punk, the two-man-racket model has done rather well over the past 12 months. Drenge, however, have decided to ditch being a duo altogether and have beefed up to a three-piece. Rob Graham – formerly of Sheffield rockers Wet Nuns – has joined on bass. Despite the fact that tonight's show marks only his fifth gig with singer/guitarist Eoin Loveless and his drummer brother Rory, he fits in so effortlessly that it's hard to remember what they looked like without him.

Drenge's sound was always big, but now, with Graham's added muscle, it's mammoth. Tonight, their sludgy, demonic commotion scores extra metal points thanks to the fearsome guitar tech – a doppelgänger for Slayer's Kerry King – looming at the side of the stage. The new songs sound like he's doubled the power of Eoin's amp. 'Running Wild' explodes into a flurry of Sabbath riffage, 'Never Awake' is Queens Of The Stone Age swapping desert landscapes for a midnight drive into the wilds of the Peak District and 'We Can Do What We Want' sees Drenge dabbling with punk and features the rare appearance of major chords. As for the old ones, 'Bloodsports' and 'Let's Pretend' crash and crack ferociously. Almost a year to the day after winning the NME Award for Best New Band, Drenge – as a two- or a three-piece – prove themselves more than worthy. ■ LEONIE COOPER

SETLIST

- Running Wild
- Side By Side
- Gun Crazy
- Backwaters
- Nothing
- We Can Do What We Want
- Break You
- Bloodsports
- The Snake
- Face Like A Skull
- Never Awake
- Fuckabout
- Let's Pretend

55

9

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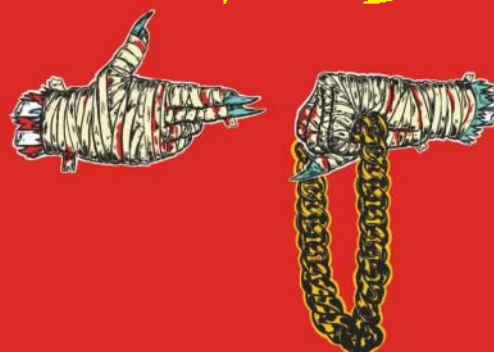
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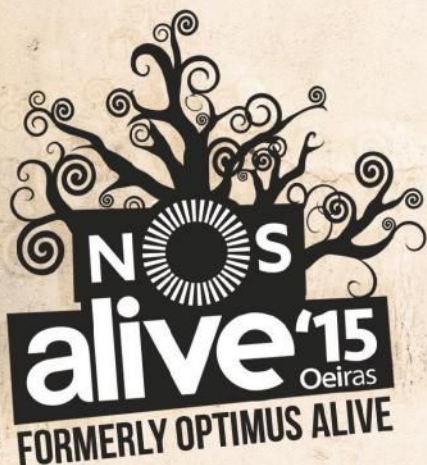
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